The Indian cashmere shawl and social status in British art, 1760-1870

The Indian Cashmere Shawl and Social Status in British Art, 1760–1870

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work submitted is my own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

Jennifer Ann van Schoor
14/02/2019

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores visual representations of social status in British art between 1760 and 1870 to analyse the significance of Indian Cashmere shawls, and the British-made shawls they inspired, as objects associated with the notion of respectability. The appropriation and domestication of this Indian garment by the British, and how it intersected with multiple formations of respectability over the late eighteenth and nineteenth century while also enduring as a fashion item, are shown to have provided women with a symbol through which to negotiate and shape their own social standing within a fluid social hierarchy. The semiotic economy of the shawl and its expressive material form provided artists with a visual language to engage with representations of contemporary social change or status display.

Uniquely, this thesis offers an art historical study of the shawl in British culture which is both temporally expansive and socially broad, in order to understand eighteenth- and nineteenth-century perceptions of a garment that became integrated into diverse visual representations of

respectable womanhood in Britain between 1760 and 1870. During this period, the Cashmere shawl would appear in a large number of British portraits and narrative paintings, representing a wide range of British women, from royalty and noblewomen to bourgeois wives and daughters, society hostesses, farmers' wives and even fallen women. Through analysis of these paintings we gain a deeper understanding of the complex and nuanced ways women negotiated social mobility, status and identity and how artists used this object's association with respectability to participate in an increasingly complex discourse on the effects of Britain's industrial progress and global expansion; what impact industrial innovation had on the meaning of status; how conflict in India found expression in the ways women presented themselves; and how artists responded to the negative effects of social change through representations of women.

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ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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Oil on canvas, 914 x 704 mm
ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

FIGURE 4.4: **George Dawe, *Princess Charlotte of Wales* (oil sketch), c.1816–8**
Oil on canvas, 702 x 429 mm
ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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ROYAL COLLECTION © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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ROYAL ARCHIVES//© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, LONDON

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ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

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PRIVATE COLLECTION

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LAING ART GALLERY

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TATE, LONDON

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BANK OF ENGLAND MUSEUM

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NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

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B.T. BATSFORD LTD COLLECTION
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TATE, LONDON

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PRIVATE COLLECTION

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NEW WALK MUSEUM & ART GALLERY, LEICESTER ARTS AND MUSEUMS
Image supplied by The Public Catalogue Foundation

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KUNSTHISTORISCHES MUSEUM, VIENNA

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Glyphograph, published in London: David Bogue;
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MCCORD MUSEUM

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NORWICH CASTLE MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

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Coloured Lithograph
PRIVATE COLLECTION

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MARY EVAN PICTURE LIBRARY

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National Gallery of Victoria

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BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

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MANCHESTER ART GALLERY

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Oil on canvas, 3180 x 2760 mm
Prado National Museum, Spain

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Published in 'Property from a Distinguished Private Asian Collection', *Sotherby's ecatalogue*, Lot No. 104, 15 October 2015, New York. <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2015/distinguished-private-asian-collection-n09361/lot.104.html> accessed 20 May 2018

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VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON

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Watercolour and gouache over pencil on paper, 272 x 373 mm
VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON

FIGURE 7.3: **Charles James Lewis, *Sunny Days,* 1869**
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PRIVATE COLLECTION

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PRIVATE COLLECTION

FIGURE 7.5: **John Singer Sargent, *Cashmere,* 1908**
Oil on canvas, 711 x 1092 mm
PRIVATE COLLECTION

ABBREVIATIONS

BL.	British Library, London
BM.	British Museum, London
BNA.	The British Newspaper Archive, British Library
BOD.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
CLO.	*Carlyle Letters Online*
DLDAMC	Digital Library for the Decorative Arts and Material Culture, University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries
GCL.	Gale Cengage Learning
HH.	Harewood House, West Yorkshire
HLH.	Houghton Library, Harvard
HTDL.	Hathi Trust Digital Library
JRL.	John Ryland Library, Manchester
LMA.	London Metropolitan Archives
NA.	National Archives, London
NAL.	National Art Library, V&A Museum, London
ODNB.	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
OED.	Oxford English Dictionary
ONS.	Office for National Statistics
PA.	Parliamentary Archives
RAA.	Royal Academy of Arts archive
RA.	Royal Archives
RA/W.	Royal Archives, Windsor
SSRA.	Simeon Solomon Research Archive
TCL.	Trinity College Library, Cambridge
WYAS.	West Yorkshire Archive Services, Leeds

NOTES ON TERMINOLOGY[1]

Today, the word 'cashmere' is used either to refer to a type of fine fibre called *pashm,* which is combed from the soft underbelly hair of the Himalayan mountain goat, or to describe the woollen textile woven from *pashm* yarn.[2] In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as well as referring to *pashm* fibre 'Cashmere' was the Anglicised name for Kashmir, a valley in the northernmost region of the Indian subcontinent. Most significantly for this thesis, the term was also frequently used by the British to describe the famous shawls woven in the Kashmir valley from *pashm* yarn. In eighteenth-century British texts, these garments were largely referred to as 'India shawls', and in the nineteenth century the terminology multiplied to include 'Cashmere shawls', 'Indian shawls',

[1] For detailed explanations of non-English words, see the Glossary section

[2] The Himalayan *capra hircus* is part of the domestic goat subspecies, *capra aegagrus hircus*

'Thibet shawls', 'real Indian' or simply 'real shawls'.[3] The Indian shawl had been produced by hand for centuries using a twill tapestry, or *kani*, weaving method, and was decorated with a particular design motif called the *buta*, 'cone' or 'pine', a floral repeat-pattern which evolved over time from a semi-naturalistic bouquet of flowers in the seventeenth century into a more abstract floral-patterned teardrop shape with a curved end in the nineteenth century (Fig. i).[4]

In its later incarnation, the *buta* motif is widely known today in the West as the 'Paisley pattern', made famous by the vast quantity of

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[3] See for example, 'Cashmere Shawls', *London Saturday Journal*, 4:79 (2 July 1842), pp.19-20; 'The Cashmere Shawl', *Leisure Hour: A Family Journal of Instruction and Recreation*, 1:27 (1 July 1852), pp.422-3. Variations in spelling, like *cashmir* and *cachemire* (from the French) are also common, see Arbiter Elegantiarum, 'Fashions for Ladies', *The Repository of Arts, Literature, Commerce, Manufactures, Fashions, and Politics*, 8:48 (December, 1812), p.356; Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*, 3 vols (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1853), I, p. 97. For 'Thibet shawl' see 'The Manufacturer's of Scotland', *Hogg's Weekly Instructor*, 92 (28 November 1846), pp.215-8; For 'real shawl' see Queen Victoria, *Diaries*, Royal Archives (RA): VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 24 May 1836 (Queen Victoria's handwriting)

[4] The earlier history of the shawl industry in Kashmir, and the evolution of the *buta* motif, is contested. Steven Cohen argues that some tentative identification of textile fragments found in Egypt and Syria suggests textile weaving with Cashmere goat hair existed in the 3rd to 6th century CE. Most accounts of Cashmere shawls place their origins in the fifteenth or sixteenth century, crediting either the Kashmiri Sultan Zain-ul 'Abidin who ruled from c.1420–70, or the sixteenth century Mughal Emperor Akbar who reigned from 1556–1605 for introducing new weaving methods and encouraging the industry. Sources furthermore suggest that these early shawls were not patterned. See Steven Cohen, 'What is a Kashmir shawl?' *Kashmir Shawls: The Tapi Collection,* ed. by Steven Cohen (Mumbai: Shoestring, 2012), pp.16-27; This thesis deals with shawls woven in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, with their design evolution beginning during the reign of the Mughal Emperors, Jahangir (*r.*1605–27) and his son Shah Jahan (*r.*1628–58), with the emergence of the Mughal imperial floral style. See Jeffery B. Spurr, 'The Kashmir Shawl: Style and Markets', *Kashmir Shawls: The Tapi Collection*, pp.33-36

imitation Cashmere shawls produced in the nineteenth century in the Scottish town of Paisley. Nineteenth-century texts refer to these British-manufactured Cashmere shawls as 'imitation shawls' or 'Indian imitations', or by the towns in which they were manufactured, Paisley, Norwich and Edinburgh being the most significant.

The terminology used to denote *buta*-patterned shawls in Western scholarship has been varied and at times confused. Most twentieth- and twenty-first-century scholars, writing for an English-speaking audience, have used the modern term 'Kashmir shawl' to denote the Indian-made garment; however, some scholars have been inconsistent and have used both 'Kashmir shawl' and 'Cashmere shawl' to denote the Indian-made garment.[5] European-made Cashmere shawls are usually labelled 'imitation shawls'. Some scholars have used the term *Pashmina* rather

[5] For the use of 'Kashmir shawl' see John Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawl,* (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1973); Frank Ames, *The Kashmir Shawl and its Indo-French Influence* (Antique Collectors' Club, 1986); Monica Levi-Strauss's monograph *The Cashmere Shawl* (1987), which focuses on the French imitation shawl and predominantly uses the term 'cashmere' as a direct translation from the French *cachemire*, the term used by the French in the nineteenth century to denote their locally made shawls. Lévi-Strauss is however inconsistent and uses both 'Kashmir' and 'cashmere' to denote the Indian-made garment, see Monique Lévi-Strauss, *The Cashmere Shawl*, trans. by Sara Harris (London: Dryad Press, 1987), pp.15; 19

than *Kashmir*, to distinguish those shawls made from *pashm* yarn from those produced from wool and silk mixes.[6]

What is missing from this taxonomy is a typological term to describe the shawl as a general type, one that encompasses all forms of shawl produced with the *buta* motif. This thesis is primarily focused on the visual representation of shawls, all of which are subject to the interpretation and agency of the artist. With a few exceptions, the actual place of manufacture and the specificity of each shawl's material classification in the paintings discussed cannot be categorically proven. What is more important for this thesis, however, is an understanding of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century perceptions of the shawls represented. For this reason, **'Cashmere shawl'** is used as a broad term to denote any shawl produced in the period under discussion with a variant of the *buta* motif. In other words it is used as a generic descriptor for all types of shawl that resemble the authentic Kashmiri shawls, whether they were handloom-woven in India, Jacquard machine-woven,

[6] Janet Rizvi, *Pashmina: The Kashmir Shawl and Beyond*, (Mumbai: Marg, 2009); Anamika Pathak, *Pashmina* (New Delhi: Roli Books, 2005)

or block-printed in France or Britain, or whether they are woven from pure *pashm* fibres, or a mixture of silk and wool.

'Indian Cashmere shawl' is used to distinguish handloom-woven, *kani* shawls with the distinctive *buta* motif, made with *pashm* yarn, known to be, or most probably, produced in India. These may not necessarily have been woven in the Kashmir valley, as many shawl weavers migrated south to areas of the Punjab during times of political upheaval, epidemics and famine, but are nonetheless generally considered to be authentic.[7]

Shawls are referred to by their place of manufacture only when the place is either known or credibly probable. '**Paisley shawl**' refers to a Cashmere shawl specifically made in the Scottish weaving town of Paisley. These may be handloom- or machine-woven, or block-printed. The same applies to '**Norwich shawl**', woven in the English city of

[7] Vanessa Chishti, 'Producing Paradise: Kashmir's Shawl Economy, the Quest for Authenticity and the Politics of Representation in Europe, c.1770–1870', *Kashmir: History, Politics, Representation,* ed. by Chitralekha Zutshi (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp.276-7; Frank Ames shows the extent of the artistic landscape in Northern India at the time of Maharajah Ranjit Singh's reign over the Punjab, with shawl ateliers stretching from Srinagar to Lahore in the region known as the Land of the Five Rivers (East of the cis-Sutlege), see Frank Ames, *Woven Masterpieces of Sikh Heritage: The Stylistic Development of the Kashmir Shawl under Maharajah Ranjit Singh 1780–1839* (Woodbridge: Antique Collector's Club, 2010)

Norwich, and '**Edinburgh shawl'**, woven in the Scottish city of Edinburgh. '**French Cashmere'** refers to shawls woven in France.[8] To avoid confusion, 'Kashmir' is only used to refer to the geographical region known as the valley of Kashmir and will not be used to denote a shawl, except when quoted in sources.

[8] The French Cashmere shawl industry was substantial, and had a significant influence on British manufacturing, as well as the design development of the *buta* motif. See Lévi-Strauss, *Cashmere Shawl* and Ames, *The Kashmir Shawl and its Indo-French Influence*

INTRODUCTION

Cashmere shawls and the visual fabric of social status

In the decade between 1761 and 1771, Joshua Reynolds produced the first portraits by a European artist of Europeans wearing the Indian Cashmere shawl. These paintings, *Captain John Foote* (1761–64) (Fig. 1.1) and *Mrs Horton, later Viscountess Maynard* (1769) (Fig. 1.2), mark a seminal moment in the appropriation of this Indian garment by Britons, and its significance as a status symbol in British visual culture. Over the next century and within the context of Britain's expanding imperialism on the Indian sub-continent, as well as significant social change brought about by industrial progress, the exquisitely soft, hand-woven Indian Cashmere shawl would be appropriated and domesticated in Britain. As this thesis

demonstrates, the shawl would initially be viewed in the metropole[1] as an exotic luxury from the Orient, inextricably connecting its wearer—man or woman—with the riches of the East. It would subsequently become assimilated into the lexicon of British female fashion, uniquely remaining *à la mode* through nearly a hundred years of capricious dress styles. Coveted for its warmth, fineness and beauty, this prohibitively expensive and exclusive Indian garment would be gifted, exchanged and traded (first- and second-hand), but it would also, as the second part of this thesis shows, be domesticated by British manufacturers, who produced shawls in imitation of, or inspired by, the shawls from the Kashmir valley. By experimenting with locally available yarns when *pashm* fibre was difficult to source or exorbitantly expensive, and by using technological innovation to lower the cost, British manufacturers from the great weaving centres of Norwich, Edinburgh and Paisley were able to extend the shawl's accessibility—and its associated meanings—to women across the different social classes.

[1] The word 'metropole' is used in this thesis to mean 'the parent state or mother city of a colony; a mother country', see 'metropole, n.' Oxford English Dictionary Online [*OED Online*] (Oxford University Press, June 2018), <www.oed.com/view/Entry/117701> accessed 6 August 2018

This thesis reveals how the process of appropriation and domestication was integral to the Cashmere shawl's formation as a signifying status symbol that would become deeply woven into the British cultural milieu during the century following the portraits of Captain Foote and Mrs Horton. As Part One demonstrates, by the end of the eighteenth century, the shawl's appeal as an exotic ornamental luxury was largely superseded by its value as a garment for women of sophisticated taste. Transformations in how the shawl was viewed by British society are shown to have intersected with the genesis of the notion of respectability at this time, thus inextricably linking the Cashmere shawl with the display of female morality and status in Britain. Part Two illustrates how the shawl's domestication complicated this process of appropriation. Imitation shawls raised particular issues around authenticity, identity, morality and the shifting scope of how respectability was expressed across different social classes.

The notion of respectability is an essential thread that runs through this thesis. With the exception of the historian Woodruff Smith, few scholars have devoted in-depth analysis to respectability as a cultural

and historical phenomenon.[2] Most simply accept nineteenth-century respectability as a given without asking what it actually means. Historian Francis Thompson, for example, offers neither analysis nor interpretation of the meaning of respectability, and provides no entry for the term *respectability* in the index of his 1988 work *The Rise of Respectable Society*.[3]

Of those scholars who have discussed the meaning of respectability, most describe the notion as a distinctive and coherent unifying feature of the middle classes in the Victorian period, bound up with social constructions of virtuous and genteel behaviour, Christian values and gendered spheres of work and home.[4] While many of these characteristics were indeed expressed by the middle classes as a

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[2] Woodruff D. Smith is the only scholar to date who has produced works on respectability as an object of study in itself, see Woodruff D. Smith, *Consumption and the Making of Respectability, 1600–1800* (New York & London: Routledge, 2002); Woodruff Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map and Public Discourse in the Nineteenth Century* (London & New York: Routledge, 2018)

[3] Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map,* p.17 n.5; Francis Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society: A social history of Victorian Britain, 1830–1900* (London: Fontana Press, 1988)

[4] *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780–1850,* ed. by Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2002), pp.103, 397; Lynda Nead, *Myths of Sexuality: Representations of Women in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), pp.5, 156; Lewis Seaman describes the 'cult of respectability', a phrase coined by Thomas Carlyle, as a bourgeois notion of self-help and personal responsibility that was, by mid-century, promoted to the aspiring working class, see Lewis C.B. Seaman, *Victorian England: Aspects of English and Imperial History*, 1837–1901 (London: Routledge, 1973), pp.18, 98-9

display of respectability, the notion itself, as argued in this thesis, was not exclusive to one class.

More recently, attention has been focused on 'working-class respectability' as a means to separate the deserving from the undeserving poor. Historian Andrew August argues that although it is 'impossible to draw a consistent distinction between rough and respectable', the construct of working-class respectability was, nonetheless, largely aspirational, drawn from what constituted middle-class respectability: church attendance, self-help, personal responsibility, domesticity and the separation of gendered roles.[5] Other scholars have shown that respectability was expressed in different ways across society in response to societal change.[6] Historian Gertrude Himmelfarb argues, for example, that the working class valued self-respect and independence as intrinsic to their notion of respectability and had no desire 'to emulate the middle classes or to aspire to that status'.[7]

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[5] Andrew August, *The British Working Class 1832–1940* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp.68-71

[6] Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The De-Moralization of Society: From Victorian Virtue to Modern Values* (New York: Knopf, 1995), pp.21-36

[7] Himmelfarb, *The De-Moralization of Society*, p.31

The most neglected area of investigation regarding respectability, again with the exception of work by Smith, is its development after the notion first emerged at the turn of the eighteenth century. Despite commencing their periodization in 1780, for example, Davidoff and Hall concentrate on the notion of middle-class respectability at its height between 1830 and 1850.[8] Thompson's thesis only begins at 1830 and other scholars have narrowed their discussion with the qualifier 'Victorian'.[9] Smith's first study on the subject provides an understanding of how respectability was formed in the late eighteenth century as a 'cultural context' that gave meaning to social structures and practices, particularly around the consumption of goods.[10] These were based on particular 'social patterns' such as status constructed around the concept of gentility, the moral and material frameworks of luxury and virtue, and the gendered concepts of rational masculinity and domestic femininity. More recently, Smith's second study emphatically argues, as this thesis

[8] Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes,* p.103

[9] Seaman, *Victorian England*; Nead, *Myths of Sexuality*; Peter Bailey, *Popular Culture and Performance in the Victorian City*, 1st publ. 1998 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); John Tosh, *A man's place: masculinity and the middle class home in Victorian England.* (London: Yale University Press, 1999); August, *British Working Class*

[10] Smith, *Consumption and Respectability*

does, that respectability was not a class-based phenomenon but a notion defined by morality.[11] As a means to define moral behaviour, respectability therefore provided a category of social status that defied class. As Smith argues:

> [O]ne of the attractions of respectability was that it offered a cultural framework within which ordinary acts were imbued with conscious meaning, thereby making them available for all sorts of strategic uses by individuals and groups.[12]

Smith's argument supports the assertion made in this thesis that respectability was expressed across different classes and displayed through morally defined behaviour.

Understanding how different social groups expressed respectability is integral to appreciating how both Indian and domesticated British-

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[11] Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map*, p.vii; Smith presents respectability as a moral map of self-respect as an identity, as the practices of moral competence and, drawing on the philosopher Pierre Bourdieu's concept of distinction, in relations to class, gender and moral standing, (see pp.23-104). For Bourdieu's theory on distinction see Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. by Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984). Some historians have previously made the point that respectability blurred the lines of class boundaries, see for example Tosh, *A man's place*, p.78

[12] Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map*, p.6; Smith argues that respectability was not only a cultural context but was also a 'phenomenon of the public sphere', an aspect that 'tended to shape and codify' its cultural context. Respectability presented itself in public discourse as 'an appropriate response to undesirable aspects of modernity' and, as such, helped shape modernity itself, see pp.5, viii; Smith considers respectability in the public sphere as a discourse on public performance, humanity and power, see pp.105-233

made Cashmere shawls generated meaning and how they were strategically used to display meaning. This thesis argues that *because* the notion of respectability was malleable in its forms of expression while constant in its assertion of morality, the Cashmere shawl's association with respectability endured even when the domestication process brought challenges to its signifying efficacy. Both the Indian shawl and its local forms therefore provided women from across the different social classes with a visual sign with which to negotiate their place in a transitional environment where social mobility was reshaping the way status was constructed and displayed.

For artists who engaged with portraiture and representations of modern life, the Cashmere shawl provided a formally and metaphorically expressive object with which to explore contested ideas of respectability and status. During the period under discussion, the Cashmere shawl appeared in a large number of British portraits and narrative paintings, representing a wide range of British women, from royalty and aristocrats to bourgeois wives and daughters, society hostesses, farmers' wives and even so-called fallen women. This thesis argues that by analysing visual displays of the Cashmere shawl in British art we gain a deeper

understanding of the complex and nuanced ways women negotiated social mobility, status and identity, and also of how artists used the Cashmere shawl to participate in an increasingly complex discourse on the effects of modernity on society.

* * *

Before proceeding, it is important to ask how an Indian garment gained such significance as a status symbol in Britain for over a century when fashion is so notoriously capricious? As one Victorian writer wryly comments:

> Fashion is a continual rotation—a perpetual influx and reflux. The fickleness of fashion was never more clearly shown than in the sudden, nay, almost instantaneous expulsion of crinoline in certain aristocratic quarters. Ladies may now be seen seated side by side in the same carriages, and on the same seats.[13]

In 1859 the 'fickleness of fashion' may have struck an amusing chord with the *Oxford Chronicle* and the other newspapers around the country that

[13] 'Spirit of the Press', *Oxford Chronicle and Reading Gazette* (20 August 1859), p.2

circulated the news of the crinoline's sudden demise.[14] Many other commentators, however, expressed deep concern over the ethical questions raised by the constant change in fashion styles, which meant 'nothing need be made substantial and lasting'.[15] As a fashionable garment for British women, the Cashmere shawl offered both quality and longevity, enduring for a century because it was uniquely identifiable, even while its material form and pattern design evolved over time. As the *Ladies' Companion* explained in 1850:

> One of the great merits of a Cashmere seems that it is really never out of date; and when, comparing even the old 'pine' patterns with the large long shawls, the rich borders of which sweep in graceful flowing lines into the very centre, we feel that they are still 'of one family,' and hold together—if the comparison be not too fanciful—rich and poor, in right clannish fashion.[16]

The Cashmere shawl is, therefore, seen as a particular style of shawl, designed with the *buta* pattern that incorporated both Indian and European manufactures, rather than an exclusive Indian garment that, in

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[14] 'Spirit of the Press', *Oxford*, p.2; the original story came from the *Court Circular* and was reprinted in over a dozen newspapers around the country.

[15] 'False System of Trade', *Monmouthshire Beacon* (8 November 1845), p.3

[16] 'Chapters On Dress—The Shawl: Chapter VI. Shawls—Cashmere—China Crepe', *The Ladies' Companion,* Ser.1 2:40 (21 September 1850), p.205

opposition to imitations, was available only to the privileged upper and rising middle classes.[17] The 'clannish fashion' of being in 'one family' gave the Cashmere shawl temporal survival far beyond most fashion garments, but it also extended the shawl's availability across British society to 'hold together' both 'rich and poor' within a familial group comprising women wearing both Indian and the more affordable British-made Cashmere shawls.

It was not only the shawl's material qualities that made it a unique fashion object, but also the multi-layered semiotic meanings associated with respectability that it embodied. Throughout history—and across most cultures—cloth has bound human societies together in multiple forms. Physically, economically, symbolically and spiritually, cloth has functioned as more than an outer layer of protection against the elements of nature.[18] As Thomas Carlyle argues in his satirical treaties *Sartor Resartus* (1834), in which he uses clothing as his central metaphor for the representation of social relationships, 'Clothes, from the King's-mantle

[17] Suzanne Daly, *The Empire Inside: Indian Commodities in Victorian Domestic Novels* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), p.12-3

[18] For the importance of cloth, and how it has furthered the political and social life of humans, see Jane Schneider and Annette B. Weiner, 'Introduction', in *Cloth and Human Experience,* ed. by Annette B. Weiner and Jane Schneider (Washington: Smithsonian, 1989), pp.1-29

downwards, are Emblematic, not of want only, but of a manifold cunning Victory over Want.'[19] Clothes are symbols of multiple human desires and the embodiment of the imagination, for, as Carlyle asks, 'must not the Imagination weave Garments, visible Bodies, wherein the else invisible creations and inspirations of our Reason are, like Spirits, revealed, and first become all-powerful […]?'[20] Cloth and clothing thus communicate as emblems of power and authority, as well as of loyalty and support, kinship, community, love and commitment.

The symbolism embodied in clothing, particularly for women, was intensely scrutinised in the nineteenth century. As one commentator on the 'Art of Dress' makes clear in the *Quarterly Review* in 1847, clothing is a 'sort of symbolic language—a kind of personal glossary—a species of body phrenology, the study of which it would be madness to neglect'.[21] Women's clothing is, the reviewer suggests, comparable with advertising boards that promote products and lifestyles: 'every woman walks about

[19] Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus,* 1st publ. 1836, ed. by Kerry McSweeney and Peter Sabor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p.56

[20] Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, p.56

[21] 'Art of Dress', *Quarterly Review*, 1:79 (1847), p.375

with a placard on which her leading qualities are advertised'.[22] Writing in *Household Words* in 1852, Harriet Martineau argues that the shawl holds particular significance for women and status: 'from China round the world to Oregon, and from the queen down to the pauper, is the shawl the symbol of woman's taste and condition'.[23]

Shawls woven in the Kashmiri valley had long formed an intricate part of the rank and tributary systems of Indian states. In the Mughal courts, honorific robes, known as *khil'at*, usually composed of a suit of clothes or valued cloths, including Indian Cashmere shawls, were bestowed on subordinates as an extension of the power and rank of the emperor.[24] As depicted in the Mughal painting, attributed to Hiranand, *Da'ud Receives a Robe of Honor from Mun'im Khan* (c.1604) (Fig. ii), this

[22] Ibid

[23] Harriet Martineau, 'Shawls', *Household Words*, 5:127 (28 August 1852), pp.553

[24] The *khil'at* ritual has been dated to the tenth century CE, see Stewart Gordon, 'Introduction: Ibn Battuta and a Region of Robing', *Robes of Honour: khil'at in Pre-Colonial and Colonial India,* ed. by Stewart Gordon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp.1-2. The inclusion of Cashmere shawls in the *khil'at* ritual in the court of the Mughal Emperor Akbar (*r*.1556–1605) has been recorded in Abul Fazl's, *Akbhanama* (*c*.1592–1605) and in *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri,* the diary of his son, the Mughal Emperor Jahangir (*r*.1605–27) see Rizvi, *Pashmina*, pp.149-63; Librarian and curator Donald Clay Johnson argues that an account in the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* suggests shawls were only introduced into the *khil'at* system as an informal and personal gift by the Emperor Jahangir, rather than as part of the official 'robes of honour', see Donald Clay Johnson, 'Seventeenth-century Perceptions of Textile Trade as Evidenced in the Writings of the Emperor Jahangir and Sir Thomas Roe', *Textiles From India: The Global Trade,* ed. by Rosemary Crill (Oxford, New York & Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2005), p.236

court ritual was a means of negotiating status with visiting rulers or of conferring favour on a subordinate; it was a sign of the superior rank of the giver and of participation in the emperor's 'aura of power' by the receiver.[25] The giving of *khil'at* was a symbolic and deeply spiritual act that was considered 'magical' or 'transformative'.[26]

This honorific system lies at the heart of early encounters between the Mughal court and diplomatic agents such as Sir Thomas Roe, who was British ambassador to the Mughal court of the Emperor Jahangir and who negotiated trade relations with India in 1615 on behalf of King James I (Fig. iii). The British response to and understanding of the cultural and spiritual significance of the *khil'at* ritual is contested. Anthropologist Bernard Cohn argues that the British reaction to *khil'at* was expressed in purely monetary terms and failed to grasp that honorific robes 'were objects in a culturally constructed system by which

[25] William R. Pinch, 'Same Difference in India and Europe', *History and Theory*, 38 (1999), p.401; For discussion about the honorific system see Sherry Rehman and Naheed Jafri, *The Kashmiri Shawl: From Jamavar to Paisley*, First British Edition (Antique Collectors' Club Ltd, 2005), pp. 45–54; See also Christopher Alan Bayly, 'The Origins of Swadeshi (home Industry): Cloth and Indian Society, 1700–1930', in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. by Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988), p.299; Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton University Press, 1996), pp.112–21; Christopher Alan Bayly, *Empire & Information: Intelligence gathering and social communication in India, 1780–1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p.298

[26] Bayly, 'The Origins of Swadeshi', pp.286; 299

authority and social relations were literally constituted and transmitted'.[27] Historian William Pinch disagrees, however, arguing that it was because diplomats like Roe had such a clear understanding of the implications of receiving *khil'at* that they were, at first, reluctant to accept them. For a Christian and a representative of the British crown, accepting the *khil'at* would place the receiver in a subordinate position, undermining their status in the eyes of the Mughal court.[28] It is clear that by the second half of the eighteenth century the East India Company administration had fully grasped the significance of the ritual as a form of hegemony, for they had appropriated it, granting *khil'at* to local Indian leaders as a symbol of British power, reward and cooperation.[29]

The spiritual significance of *khil'at* was largely lost on the British public when Cashmere shawls entered the Indian/British commodity market; however, the political and social potency of the shawl as a status-

[27] Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge,* p18

[28] Pinch, 'Same Difference in India and Europe', p.401

[29] Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, pp.117-8; The British continued the practice of *khil'at* in the nineteenth century. A report in the *Asiatic Journal* describes in detail the robes of honour presented to 'several vakeels [*sic*] of native states, and natives of rank, in attendance' at the Governor-General's Durbar. These varied greatly depending on the rank of the receiver but all include at least one 'pair of shawls'. See *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register, For British India and its Dependencies*, 20 (September 1825), p.352

giving object endured in Britain. In 1846 the government reversed the symbolism of gift-giving by demanding shawls as part of a tributary system. Article 10 of the 1846 Treaty of Amritsar—through which the Kashmir Valley became part of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir—declares:

> [The newly installed Maharajah Gulab Singh] acknowledges the supremacy of the British Government and will in token of such supremacy present annually to the British Government one horse, twelve shawl goats of approved breed […] and three pairs of Cashmere shawls.[30]

Power was signified in this way by receiving rather than giving the shawl, a reversal that Cohn argues should be interpreted in cultural terms:

> The British were aware of the contradiction inherent in the practice in terms of Indian theories of prestation. In India a superior always gives more than he receives, yet as an 'economic man,' the nineteenth-century Englishman was not about to enhance his honour by giving more than receiving.[31]

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[30] *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads relating to India and Neighbouring Countries (Revised and Continued up to 1929), Vol. XII: Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, Assam and Burma*, compiled by C.U. Aitchison (Delhi, Mittal, 1983), p.22

[31] Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, p.118

The difference between Indian and British 'theories of prestation' also signalled the shift of power acknowledgement from within British India to the British metropole. While technically Kashmir was part of a princely state with an Indian ruler, symbolically it had been appropriated and incorporated into Britain's expanding Empire.

As Chapter 4 demonstrates, Queen Victoria further manipulated the political and social symbolism of the Cashmere shawl at home in the metropole. Diplomatically she continued to give and receive Indian Cashmere shawls; however, to encourage the reform of social behaviour—particularly among the aristocracy—she chose not to wear them, promoting instead British-manufactured Cashmere shawls. Empire was thus domesticated and consumed through the production and consumption of objects like the locally made Cashmere shawl.[32] Locally designed and woven shawls were thus incorporated in 'right clannish

[32] Chitralekha Zutshi, ''Designed for eternity': Kashmiri Shawls, Empire, and Cultures of Production and Consumption in Mid-Victorian Britain', *The Journal of British Studies,* 48:02, (April 2009), p.421

fashion' into the 'one family' referred to by the *Ladies' Companion,* and defined by the common *buta* pattern.[33]

Despite the popularity of British shawls, or rather because of it, the imitation of 'real' Cashmere raised concerns for moralists and design purists about the negative effects of industrialisation and mechanisation on the wellbeing of society as a whole.[34] As is shown in the last two chapters, artists responded to debates about the immorality of imitation and the loss of material authenticity by using locally made shawls to challenge assumptions and prejudices, but also to engage with the dangers of modernity on an allegorical level. These chapters show that the Cashmere shawl's efficacy as a status symbol in Britain was neither straightforward nor unchallenged, but they also reinforce its staying power for over a century. The fickleness of fashion did eventually remove the Cashmere shawl from women's shoulders in the last quarter of the nineteenth century but not necessarily from their lives.[35]

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[33] 'Chapters On Dress—The Shawl', *Ladies' Companion*, p.205

[34] 'Shams and imitations especially in woven fabrics', *Journal of Design and Manufactures,* 4:19 (September 1850), pp.8-10

[35] Although beyond the scope of this thesis, the Cashmere shawl has endured in a variety of meaningful ways since the 1870 until the present day

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Since the textile historian John Irwin wrote his influential work on the Indian Cashmere shawl in 1955, Western textile historians and textile designers have paid a lot of attention to this sumptuous Indian garment.[36] Monographs by Irwin, the antiques dealer Frank Ames and textile historian Monique Lévi-Strauss have provided the groundwork for further, beautifully illustrated monographs that emphasise the history, design evolution, production and consumption of and influences on the Indian Cashmere shawl. For cultural scholars this body of work has been invaluable for providing knowledge on this extraordinary garment.[37] The primary aims of these monographs are to historicise the shawl and classify and date its design evolution, as well as to elaborate on the different influences that have facilitated design and technical innovation

[36] John Irwin, *Shawls: A Study in Indo-European Influences* (London: HMSO, 1955), updated in 1973 and republished as *The Kashmir Shawl* (London: HMSO, 1973)

[37] Ames, *The Kashmir Shawl and its Indo-French Influence*; Ames, *Woven Masterpieces*; Lévi-Strauss, *The Cashmere Shawl*; Rehman and Jafri, *The Kashmiri Shawl*; Rizvi and Ahmed, *Pashmina*; *Kashmir Shawls: The Tapi Collection,* ed. by Cohen; *The Norwich Shawl: Its History and a Catalogue of the Collection at Strangers Hall Museum, Norwich*, ed. by Pamela Clabburn (London: HMSO, 1995); Matthew Blair, *The Paisley Shawl and the Men Who Produced It; a Record of an Interesting Epoch in the History of the Town* (Paisley: Alexander Gardner, 1904); C.H. Rock, *Paisley Shawls: A chapter of the Industrial Revolution* (Paisley Museum and Art Gallery, 1966); Valerie Reilly, *The Official Illustrated History: The Paisley Pattern* (Glasgow: Richard Drew, 1987); Valerie Reilly, *Paisley Patterns: A Design Source Book* (New York: Portland House, 1989)

or have politically and economically challenged the shawl-weaving industry. Most of these monographs use methodologies dominated by social history and textile connoisseurship. It is apt, therefore, that paintings in which the shawl is rendered in the finest of detail have been utilised as historical evidence to date and situate the shawls within a chronological development. Almost all have drawn heavily on Jean-Dominique Ingres's highly finished and exquisitely detailed paintings of French noblewomen even when discussing the Cashmere shawl in a British context.[38] Those textile historians who have used a wider range of artistic representations of the Cashmere shawl, such as Penelope Alfrey, have tended to use them illustratively without any in-depth analysis of

[38] Irwin, *Kashmir Shawl*, p.15. Irwin mentions Jean-Dominique Ingres's portraits: *Mme Rivière* (1805), *Mme la Comtesse de Tournon* (1812), *Mme de Senonnes* (1814), *Baronne Popenhein* (1818), and *The Stamaty Family* (1818). The footnote informs us these paintings were mostly reproduced in Robert Rosenblum's *Ingres* (London, 1967); Daly, *The Empire Inside*, p.17, Daly offers the same list of portraits as John Irwin with the exclusion of the last two, and the addition of *Mme Devauçay* (1807); Rehman and Jafri, *The Kashmiri Shawl,* p. 331. See also Aileen Ribeiro, *Ingres in Fashion*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), pp.186, 188, 192; Lévi-Strauss provides a more varied account of the artistic response to the Cashmere shawl, however, while spanning a far wider period, she provides no in-depth analysis of the paintings reproduced, using them instead to identify and date the shawls. Since her study is predominantly of the French market it is understandably biased toward French artistic production, see Lévi-Strauss, *The Cashmere Shawl*, p.16

how or why the shawls are represented in a particular way and what this may reveal about the deeper meaning of the shawl.[39]

While primarily an art historical study, this thesis is also situated in a growing academic study of material culture that gained momentum in the 1980s when, in the words of historians David Feldman and Jon Lawrence, scholars turned their attention to the 'careful analysis of the small-scale and the immediate'.[40] This shift from social history to cultural history focused on the ways identities and social meanings are constructed within culture through the careful analysis of the minutiae of everyday life and its materials.[41] While the material turn registered right across the social sciences and the humanities, its foundations are to be found largely in the fields of anthropology, history and literature.[42] Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's 1986 anthology *The Social Life of Things* gave particular impetus to the material turn and demonstrated the

[39] Clabburn, *The Norwich Shawl* has a better selection of British paintings, but they are used illustratively and are not analysed in any depth.

[40] *Structures and Transformations in Modern British History*, ed. by David Feldman and Jon Lawrence (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p.7

[41] Ibid, pp.7-8 for a general overview on the material turn; for an overview pertaining to Victorian studies see Jennifer Sattaur, 'Thinking Objectively: An Overview of "Thing Theory" in Victorian Studies', *Victorian Literature and Culture,* 40 (2012), pp.347-57

[42] Feldman and Lawrence, *Structures and Transformations*, p.7

fruits of interdisciplinary practice.[43] Appadurai's focus is specific to the movement of commodities and how they are culturally defined and socially regulated. He argues that to understand the exchange of commodities we need to look further than the forms and functions of exchange and to interrogate the 'social life of things'.[44] In other words, we have to 'follow the things themselves, for their meanings are inscribed in their forms, their uses, their trajectories'.[45] It is the 'things-in-motion,' Appadurai argues, that, methodologically speaking, 'illuminate their human and social context'.[46]

Literary scholar Bill Brown, who formulated Thing Theory, moves the discourse beyond the production and consumption of things to ask how they become 'recognizable, representable, and exchangeable to begin with' and 'why and how we use objects to make meaning, to make or re-make ourselves, to organize our anxieties and affections, to

[43] *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspectiv*e, ed. by Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986). The anthology includes papers by anthropologists, historians and an archaeologist, who use cross-disciplinary methodologies to follow a diverse array of objects

[44] Ibid, p.5

[45] Ibid

[46] Ibid

sublimate our fears and shape our fantasies'.[47] Brown's move away from the more Marxist explorations of objects as commodities to explore their cultural, historical and emotional contexts focuses, therefore, on the complexities of the object's signifying potential.[48] In response to Appadurai's and Brown's theories, the material turn has produced a huge body of multi-disciplinary literature that has followed the production, consumption and meanings of a vast array of things, including the 'sense of', 'sex of', 'ideas in' and 'history from' things.[49]

While anthropologists and historians follow the forms, uses and trajectories of material objects themselves, literary historians analyse things as represented through the medium of words. In Victorian studies, literary historians, such as Elaine Freedgood, have been particularly active in material culture, revisiting novels to explore the plethora of things that generated meaning and shaped identity in the lives of

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[47] Bill Brown, *A Sense of Things: The Object Matter of American Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), p.4; Bill Brown, 'Thing Theory', *Things*, Special Issue of *Critical Inquiry*, 28 (2001)

[48] Sattaur, 'Thinking Objectively', p.347

[49] Brown, *A Sense of Things*; *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, ed. by Victoria de Grazia (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Elaine Freedgood, *The Ideas in Things: Fugitive Meaning in the Victorian Novel* (University of Chicago Press, 2010); *History from Things: Essays on Material Culture*, ed. by Steven Lubar and W. David Kingery (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993)

nineteenth-century subjects.[50] Freedgood argues that despite the cluttered presence of things in Victorian novels, the meaning or 'ideas' in things have been largely obscured by the literary 'protocols' that focus on 'subjects and plots'.[51] The meaning of objects, she argues, is thus hidden by the characteristics we already know of the subjects who use them. In order to reach the knowledge 'stockpiled' in objects that may reveal the true nature of a culture, Freedgood argues that they have to be followed 'off the page' to go beyond any 'weak metonymy'.[52]

Reading the meaning 'stockpiled' in an object through the medium of words in literature is comparable to reading the meaning of objects through the medium of paint. Marcia Pointon, for example, explores sartorial accessories such as buttons and stockings in eighteenth-century portraits of men, demonstrating a dynamic interplay between how portraits are commissioned, produced and consumed and how dress is purchased and consumed that reveals the important role these

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[50] Freedgood, *The Ideas in Things*; Jean Arnold, *Victorian Jewelry, Identity, and the Novel: Prisms of Culture* (Farnham & Burlington: Ashgate, 2011); Catherine Waters, *Commodity Culture in Dickens's* Household Words: *The Social Life of Goods* (Aldershot & Burlington: Ashgate, 2008); Daly, *The Empire Inside*; Isobel Armstrong, *Victorian Glassworlds: Glass Culture and the Imagination, 1830–1880* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2008)

[51] Freedgood, *The Ideas in Things*, pp.1-2

[52] Ibid

accessories play in communicating social status and sexual prowess.[53] Accessories, she argues, 'produce and sustain forms of inclusion and exclusion: they construct, in a peculiarly assertive and seductive way, a rhetorical narrative'. [54] Pointon thus treats 'portraiture as a tool that makes possible the registering of an identity in relation to the social'.[55]

Other art historians have sought to engage with the material qualities and spatial forms of the artwork-as-object, in order to offer a different approach to generating meaning.[56] Kristina Huneault, for example, writing on the materiality of two miniature paintings produced in a colonial context, argues that the diminutive size of these paintings is 'central to their transcultural force'. The paintings act like magnifying

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[53] Marcia Pointon, 'Accessories in Portraits: stockings, buttons, and the construction of masculinity in the eighteenth century', *Portrayal and the search for identity* (London: Reaktion, 2013), pp.121-79 quote is on p.127. Pointon has also looked at jewellery in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, see Marcia Pointon, *Brilliant Effects: A Cultural History of Gem Stones and Jewellery* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009)

[54] Pointon, *Portrayal and the search for identity,* p.124

[55] Ibid*,* p.11; For more examples of art historical studies which research the meaning of objects or commodities portrayed in artworks see, Sandra Klopper, 'Gentlemen at Leisure: riding breeches in the photographic portrait images of black South African men', *Art and the British Empire,* ed by Tim Barringer, Geoff Quilley and Douglas Fordham (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 2007); pp.327-36; Romita Ray, 'Storm in a teacup? Visualising tea consumption in the British Empire', *Art and the British Empire,* pp.205-22

[56] *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, material culture and the museum,* ed. by Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn (Abingdon & New York: Routledge, 1998)

glasses, she argues, their space functioning as 'an active lens' through which identities can be 'fashioned and discerned'.[57]

Of particular relevance to this thesis are those scholars who have followed the 'social life' of the Cashmere shawl from India to Britain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when, as historians Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose argue, the nature of Empire evolved from a mercantile power dominating the ocean trade routes to an 'empire of conquest' that changed the political and economic effect of imperialism on the British at home.[58] Historian Chitralekha Zutshi argues that the Indian Cashmere shawl provided a vehicle for the British public to actively interact with the 'idea of empire'.[59] She concentrates her study on the interconnection between Indian Cashmere shawls as a Victorian fashion that signalled good taste and popular nineteenth-century narratives about the production and consumption of shawls in India.[60] Through the 'lived experience' of interacting with these narratives while

[57] Kristina Huneault, 'Miniature Paintings as Transcultural Obects? The John Norton and Peter Jones Portraits', *Transculturation in British Art, 1770–1930,* ed. by Julie F. Codell (Farnham & Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), pp.39-57

[58] *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World,* 2nd edn, ed. by Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (Cambridge University Press, 2009), p.1

[59] Zutshi, 'Designed for eternity', pp.420-40

[60] Ibid

also consuming the shawl, she argues that 'a specific part of the empire' was 'naturalised' in the metropole.[61] Zutshi's analysis contends that the shawl's primary naturalised significance is as an object of 'taste', the domestication of which raised moral issues for Victorians. Imitation shawls, she argues, 'encapsulated deep anxieties' about the deterioration of British taste and design, about the 'modernity' of British industrial products and about Britain's continued 'dominance in the global capitalist system'.[62] Zutshi's argument is however, limited by her assumption that consumption patterns are determined by class: the Indian Cashmere shawls being consumed only by the upper classes, while the British imitation shawls by the middle classes.[63] Taste therefore becomes a morality issue that is determined by class rather than behaviour.

In *The Empire Inside,* literary historian Suzanne Daly also explores England's complicated and evolving relationship with India, which she argues is culturally mediated through the relationship between English

[61] Ibid, p.440
[62] Ibid, p.432
[63] Ibid, pp.432, 438

people and Indian things in mid-nineteenth-century domestic novels.[64] 'Material histories', she writes, 'give us glimpses of human histories, stories of exploitation and agency that the novels will not tell but cannot leave alone either.'[65] Novelists, she argues, used these fictional Indian imports to 'domesticate and contain the *idea* of India' by writing them into novels as 'indispensable accoutrements of middle-class English life'.[66] In her chapter on Indian Cashmere shawls, her argument, like Zutshi's, is limited by her contention that the shawl is a marker of 'class'. Unlike Zutshi, Daly designates the middle classes, rather than the upper classes, as consumers of the Indian shawl.[67] By confining her enquiry to the mid-nineteenth century, Daly also limits the scope of the shawl's residual and emergent meanings, which, as this thesis will show, have a bearing on how the shawl was strategically used by Victorians over a longer time period.

Taking a broader temporal approach than Daly, historian Michelle Maskiell's essay 'Consuming Kashmir' focuses on how the Indian shawls

[64] Daly, *The Empire Inside*, p.2
[65] Ibid, p.5
[66] Ibid, pp.6-7 (emphasis in original)
[67] Ibid, p.13

served as a 'material vector to trace persistent patterns' within historical fashion cycles over four centuries.[68] She argues that the Eurocentric focus on fashion cycles, which ignores the vast trade in Cashmere shawls between India and Asia, America and within India's domestic market, has created a 'rise and fall narrative' that incorrectly places European fashion whims at the centre of the Kashmiri weaving industry.[69] Instead, Maskiell rightly shows that there were multiple factors that impacted on the weaving trade, from political turmoil and taxation to the ebb and flow of other Asian domestic markets.[70] Nonetheless, Maskiell also argues that textile historians have underestimated the effects of colonialism on the shawl industry in the procurement of Kashmiri shawls by Europeans, not only for trade, but to serve as models for European manufacturers to imitate. Like Zutshi and Daly, Maskiell argues that the appropriation and domestication of the Indian shawl by Europeans was a way of naturalising Empire. Specifically, she points to romantic notions of the

[68] Michelle Maskiell, 'Consuming Kashmir: Shawls and Empires, 1500–2000', *Journal of World History*, 13:1 (Spring 2002), p.29

[69] Maskiell, 'Consuming Kashmir', pp.35, 58; Maskiell argues that Asian trade in Kashmiri shawls antedated the British conquest of India by several centuries, and Kashmiri shawls retained their capital as valued gifts in local regimes after the British Raj was established, see p.35

[70] Ibid, p.34

East that obscured 'the violence enabling colonial possession of shawl designs'.[71]

In her explication of the shawl's assimilation into European fashion cycles, Maskiell argues that the shawl was used as a 'class marker' for bourgeois women, who had distinct tastes from those of the aristocracy and working classes.[72] She also describes how Napoleon bought seventeen Indian Cashmere shawls for his bride Marie-Louise, many of which were worn, draped over the arms of her ladies-in-waiting, at their wedding in 1810. Maskiell does not explain this disparity in class, nor does she consider the overwhelming evidence suggesting that women from across the social spectrum wore both Indian and European-made Cashmere shawls.

Cashmere shawls from India were exorbitantly priced; however, formal trade was not the only means of obtaining an Indian Cashmere shawl. Historian Margot Finn highlights the use of Anglo-Indian family networks that saw 'richly dyed and finely woven Indian shawls' regularly pass 'from sons in India to mothers in Britain, and thence into the hands

[71] Ibid
[72] Ibid, pp.38-39

of influential aristocratic patrons' in the early part of the nineteenth century.[73] Historian Nupur Chaudhuri has shown that by the mid-nineteenth century *memsahibs* were sending second-hand Indian Cashmere shawls to London in great quantities and at lower prices than new shawls, thus creating a large market in second-hand goods purchased through exchange columns in periodicals and newspapers.[74] Chaudhuri shows that they were a 'conduit for the flow of culture', made accessible to 'a segment of middle-class Victorian women in Britain who previously could not afford such items'.[75] Indian shawls were thus more fluid in their movements between classes than most studies suggest.

Likewise, literary historian Suchitra Choudhury, in her analysis of the Paisley shawl in Wilkie Collins's novel *Armadale* (1864–66), argues that the 'key context here is of class'.[76] The shawl was used, she argues, as 'a representation of the working classes' and their oppression as a parallel

[73] Margot C. Finn, 'Colonial Gifts: Family Politics and the Exchange of Goods in British India, c.1780–1820', *Modern Asian Studies,* 40:1 (2006), pp.221-2

[74] Nupur Chaudhuri, 'Shawls, Jewelry, Curry, and Rice in Victorian Britain', *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance*, ed. by Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), p.232

[75] Chaudhuri, 'Shawls, Jewelry, Curry', p.232

[76] Suchitra Choudhury, 'Fashion and the 'Indian Mutiny': The 'Red Paisley Shawl' in Wilkie Collins's *Armadale', Victorian Literature and Culture,* 44 (2016), p.826

to the oppression of the Indian Sepoys that led to the 1857 Indian Mutiny.[77] Choudhury insists that the Paisley shawl's implicit link with India provided Collins with a 'humanist appeal' for the character of Lydia as an abused child-turned-murderess. This, she explains, means the shawl 'operates as an emblem of terror and fatality', and as 'a site of rebellion against the existing social order', all of which 'resonates with the national collective memory of the Indian Mutiny'.[78] As will be demonstrated in Chapter 5, however, in the intervening years between the Indian Mutiny and Collins's novel it was the Indian shawl that was associated with terror and fatality, while the 'rude' products of Scotland recall the faith, courage and self-sacrifice of the Scottish soldiers who relieved the siege of Lucknow. [79]

For Queen Victoria supporting the local shawl industry was a sign of British patriotism and respectability. In John Thomas's watercolour *Windsor Castle: Design for the Queen's Audience Room* (1861) a locally

[77] Ibid, p.823; for consistency the term 'Indian Mutiny' is used in this thesis as it was in the nineteenth century. The author acknowledges the term is problematic when viewed from a post-colonial perspective.

[78] Choudhury, 'Fashion and the 'Indian Mutiny', pp.827-8

[79] John Ruskin, 'The Two Paths: Lecture II, The Unity of Art (1859), *Complete Works,* ed. by E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, 39 vols (London: George Allen, 1905), XVI, pp.306-7

made Cashmere shawl is even placed front and centre (Fig. 4.12).[80] The following year, at the 1862 Industrial Exhibition, Paisley shawls were given 'special approval', suggesting that even design reformers may have given the locally made Cashmere a thumbs-up.

The literature discussed above has opened the way for a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the different ways Victorians viewed and incorporated India into their lived experience at home in the metropole. Yet, as this thesis will demonstrate, scholars' reliance on class to classify the consumption of authentic and imitation shawls limits our ability to reach the complexity of meaning embodied by the shawl in relation to social status and mobility in the nineteenth century. This tendency toward the assignation of class as a means to understand the meaning of the shawl reveals limited analysis of what constituted respectability from the end of the eighteenth century and of how women used the shawl's association with respectability strategically. The current project aims, within the limits of a thesis, to fill this analytical gap by exploring the

[80] Blair, *The Paisley Shawl*, p.25

Cashmere shawl's association with respectability and how respectability communicated social status.

* * *

This thesis is presented in two parts, reflecting the two main processes at work in the history of the Indian Cashmere shawl in Britain: its original appropriation by the British and its subsequent domestication by local weaving manufactures. Part One encompasses the shawl's progression from an appropriated, eighteenth-century exotic luxury through to its assimilation into the lexicon of female fashion and its integration into the emerging notion of respectability at the end of the eighteenth century. This progression reveals the shawl's transformation into a pluralistic symbol that offered women from different social backgrounds an object with which to determine and display their own respectability. Artistic responses to social change and the display of status for British women will be examined within this context of cultural appropriation.

Chapter 1 is the first in-depth study of the Indian Cashmere shawl in British visual culture between 1760 and the end of the eighteenth century. By examining three portraits by Joshua Reynolds, this chapter

argues that both men and women from outside the British establishment used the shawl to display their exotic associations with the East. Their aim was to enhance their social status and insinuate themselves into the upper echelons of society. When first appropriated from the East, the Indian Cashmere shawl offered the mutability of a masquerade costume rather than the high-fashion garment it would become.[81] The displays of status in Reynolds's portraits are explored within the context of contemporary debates on the moral implications of luxury on society, in particular that of exotic Indian textiles.

By the end of the century, as Chapter 2 demonstrates, the Indian Cashmere shawl had been reconceptualised. From its more exotic, theatrical mid-eighteenth century mode, discussed in Chapter 1, the shawl had become a high-fashion garment in Britain, signalling superior taste and status. By drawing comparisons between artistic representations of Emma Hamilton—famous for her classically inspired Attitudes (Fig. 2.1), performed in the 1790s and using Cashmere shawls to

[81] By mutability I mean an object that complicated and concealed rather than revealed the true identity and status of the wearer; one that challenged, rather than reinforced morality; one that masqueraded as something contrary to the truth.

style well-known historic characters—and the early nineteenth-century paintings by George Dawe, *Louisa Hope* (1812) (Fig. 2.2) and *Princess Charlotte of Wales* (*c*.1816–18) (Fig. 2.32), this chapter argues that the Indian Cashmere shawl became assimilated into the British cultural milieu through a convergence of factors. These factors related to a classical Greek revival in taste, a growing interest in British Indology[82]—particularly the study of India's ancient civilisations—and the emergence of the notion of respectability. Within this context, the Indian Cashmere shawl, in combination with classical Grecian gowns, became emblematic of the Regency period's distinct aesthetic style in dress (Fig. 2.25) and also positioned it to become the most enduring visual symbol associated with feminine respectability in the Victorian epoch.

The final chapter in Part One analyses the symbolic pluralism of the Indian Cashmere shawl at the apex of its popularity, and how it was used in portraits to associate its wearer with respectability and status at a time

[82] Indology is the study of Indian history, literature, philosophy, and culture. Classical Indology (as distinguished from Modern Indology) focuses on Sanskrit and other ancient South East Asian language sources. British Indology was pioneered at the end of the eighteenth century by the lawyer and linguist, Sir William Jones, and by the orientalist and mathematician, Henry Thomas Colebrooke. See Michael J. Franklin, *Orientalist Jones: Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746–1794* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Rosane Rocher and Ludo Rocher, *The Making of Western Indology: Henry Thomas Colebrooke and the East India Company* (Abingdon & New York: Routledge, 2012)

when social hierarchies were being transformed by industrialisation and material consumption.[83] Unlike previous studies, which assign a relatively rigid, middle-class respectability to the Indian shawl, this chapter argues that respectability had multiple social meanings by this period. These are revealed by comparing two mid-nineteenth-century paintings, one of Lady Louisa Lascelles, Countess of Harewood, by George Richmond (Fig. 3.19), the other by William Holman Hunt of Mrs Fairbairn (Fig. 3.29), wife of the middle-class industrialist Thomas Fairbairn. The visual strategies used in these portraits to negotiate social status reveal that the shawl's semiotic economy is malleable and therefore provided women from different and even competing social situations with a symbol through which to negotiate their status and define their own respectability.

Part Two of this thesis argues that the capacity of the Indian Cashmere shawl to define social status contributed to the demand for more affordable versions of the Indian garment and demonstrates how

[83] For an in-depth discussion on how social transformations affected social ambiguity, see Michael W. McCahill, 'Peerage Creations and the Changing Character of the British Nobility, 1750–1830', *The English Historical Review*, XCVI (1981), pp.259-84; see also David Cannadine. *Aspects of Aristocracy: Grandeur and Decline in Modern Britain* (London & New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), esp. Ch.1

domesticated, locally made Cashmere shawls worked as visual symbols in representations of women, as both an extension of, and in opposition to, the Indian shawl. The chapters examine what effects these shawls had on self-conscious displays of status and visual representations of social change and how they contributed to nineteenth-century debates on materialism and morality. With images of women wearing British-made Cashmere shawls ranging from the Queen to fallen women, the chapters reveal how definitions of respectability and authenticity were reformulated and challenged, and how these shawls became interwoven into social constructs of national identity, status and morality.

In the first two decades of her reign, and despite receiving numerous Indian Cashmere shawls as politically symbolic gestures contrived for imperial diplomacy, Queen Victoria embraced domesticated, British-made Cashmere shawls (Fig. 4.14). As Chapter 4 argues, royal patronage of Paisley and Norwich shawls formed part of a new political symbolism constructed by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert to express their vision of British society. Domesticity, 'home interests' such as local manufacturing and design, and bourgeois respectability would provide a framework for this construction of a national identity.

The royal couple devised a 'performative process', which attempted visually to homogenise social class and to stabilise Britain's hierarchical social structure in the wake of class revolutions in France and Chartist uprisings in Britain.[84] The Queen's dress style was especially aimed at reforming a morally corrupt and ostentatious aristocracy. By examining a number of works of art representing the Queen and her mother the Duchess of Kent (Fig. 4.2), who was notorious for her displays of luxury and superiority, this chapter demonstrates how Queen Victoria's support for the local shawl industry not only promoted bourgeois values, but also changed the way the aristocracy represented itself.

While the Queen patronised high-quality locally made shawls as a sign of bourgeois respectability and patriotism, the cheap, printed Cashmere shawls were described by one nineteenth-century journal as 'sham imitations', associated with the deceptive and even criminal use of shawls by working-class women.[85] Chapter 5 asks whether these printed shawls socially and morally define their wearer in the same way in

[84] Adrienne Munich, *Queen Victoria's Secrets,* (New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp.4-5

[85] 'Shams and imitations', *Journal of Design*, p.8

artistic representations. By analysing works by Abraham Solomon, this chapter concludes that the artist used the printed Paisley shawl in two pendant paintings, *Waiting for the Verdict* (1857) (Fig. 5.2) and *Not Guilty* (1859) (Fig. 5.3), to challenge the assumption of inferiority and criminality ascribed to imitation shawls. Instead, he produces an artistic expression of integrity in which the shawl, even as an object of material imitation, constitutes a form of *personal* authenticity irrespective of its *material* authenticity. Solomon's interpretation of personal integrity contrasts with the disingenuous use of the authentic Indian Cashmere shawl as a disguise for the loss of respectability in numerous cultural productions. Solomon's work is examined within the context of British reactions to the 1857 Indian Mutiny, in which the Indian shawl is re-orientalised by critics such as John Ruskin, who declares that only 'cruel and savage nations, cruel in temper, savage in habits and conception', could produce such an object.[86]

While Chapter 5 reveals the complexity of the shawl's 'semiotic economy' in relation to authenticity and imitation, the final chapter

[86] John Ruskin, 'The Two Paths: Lecture II, The Unity of Art (1859), *Complete Works,* ed. by E.T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, 39 vols (London: George Allen, 1905), XVI, pp.306-7

explores the effects of morality and sexuality on the shawl's symbolic efficacy by examining images of prostitutes or fallen women with Cashmere shawls—such as William Holman Hunt's *The Awakening Conscience* (1853) (Fig. 6.1)—in which the notion of respectability appears to be untenable.[87] The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate that the association between the Cashmere shawl—in all its forms—and the notion of respectability remains intact and meaningful, even in paintings of women who have lost their virtue. It argues that the convergence of the prostitute and the Cashmere shawl in the same image is a deliberate artistic juxtaposition of two opposing signs within a symbolic rather than a purely narrative strategy.[88] When considered within a symbolic framework, the prostitute does not represent an individual or even a type of woman; she represents a society in ruin or in danger of moral decline.

[87] The terms 'prostitute' and 'fallen woman' are not fixed but are generally attributable by class; the 'prostitute' is associated with the working class and the 'fallen woman' is usually applied to middle class women who have 'fallen' from grace by having sex outside of marriage. See Nead, *Myths*, pp.94-16; Nine Attwood looks more closely at how the Victorian articulated these definitions, arguing that 'it was never as simple as distinguishing between full-time, part-time, barter or tradition. Any loveless or extramarital sexual activity could be deemed illicit, immoral, "fallen" or as prostitution', see Nina Attwood, *The Prostitute's Body: Rewriting Prostitution in Victorian Britain* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), pp.13-14

[88] Lynda Nead, 'The Magdalen in Modern Times: The Mythology of the Fallen Woman in Pre-Raphaelite Painting', *Oxford Art Journal*, 7:1, (1984), p.30

The shawl's association with respectability therefore becomes crucial in negotiating the degree to which morality can be restored, if at all.

This thesis is concerned with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British perceptions of an appropriated Indian garment, its assimilation and its domestication in Britain. It does not attempt to tell a comprehensive history of the Indian Cashmere shawl, nor of the European manufactures it inspired. Neither does it pretend to be an authority on the provenance of Cashmere shawls, their exact material constitution or their precise method of production. Instead it uses art historical methods of visual analysis to read the semiotic meaning encoded in paintings. It also goes *off the canvas* to understand the 'social life' of the shawl and how it generated meaning. It is the only study to date focused primarily on Cashmere shawls in British visual culture and society to examine how women strategically used the shawl, and how artists engaged with it as a signifying object, over a significant time period.

PART ONE

APPROPRIATION

By tracing the etymology of the word 'appropriate' to its Latin root *adpropriāre*, we arrive at the definition: 'to render or make one's own'.[1] Cultural appropriation is therefore an act of rendering an aspect of one culture as part of another. There is also a secondary meaning for the word 'appropriate', since the action of making something one's own suggests intention and agency on the part of the maker. The action, therefore, becomes open to scrutiny, raising the question: Is it appropriate, or proper, correct and suitable? This aspect of cultural appropriation, which has occupied many post-colonial scholars, is the most contentious as it carries both pejorative and approbatory

[1] Etymology derived from: '<Old French aproprie-r <late Latin appropriāre, adpropriāre (c.450), <ad to, with idea of 'rendering' + proprius own', see 'appropriation, n', *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, June 2018), <www.oed.com/view/Entry/9877> accessed 3 July 2018; 'Appropriate: aˈppropre | aˈpproprie, v', *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, June 2018), <www.oed.com/view/Entry/9866> accessed 3 July 2018.

connotations.[2] The notion of cultural appropriation in the humanities and social sciences has, therefore, acquired a complex set of meanings.[3] Early models of cultural appropriation based on the inappropriate imposition of power over an 'other' have, more recently, been tempered by notions of influence, transculturation and intertextuality; these suggest that appropriation has the potential to be a 'two-way process' in which 'exchange and creative response' occur.[4]

While a lot of this work has concentrated on the effects of cultural appropriation within colonised spaces, this thesis is focused on its effect

[2] Robert S. Nelson, 'Appropriation', *Critical Terms for Art History,* ed. by Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, 2nd edn (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), p.162; For appropriation as manifest in a colonial or post-colonial context, see Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1978); Annie Coombes, 'The Recalcitrant Object: Culture Contact and the Question of Hybridity', *Colonial Discourse/Postcolonial Theory,* ed. by Francis Barker, Peter Hulme, and Margaret Iversen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), pp.89-114; Anjuli Gupta, 'English Writing in India: Fear of Experimentation, Fear of Appropriation—Death of Creativity?', *Crisis and Creativity in the New Literatures in English,* ed. by Geoffrey Davis and Hena Maes-Jelinek (Amsterdam: Redopi, 1990), pp.151-68

[3] Cultural appropriation is a complex term with multiple applications, see *Borrowed Power: Essays on Cultural Appropriation,* ed. by Bruce Ziff and Pratima V. Rao (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1997), pp.1-27; For a genealogy of appropriation theory see Nelson, 'Appropriation', pp.160-73

[4] Kathleen Ashley and Véronique Plesch, 'The Cultural Processes of Appropriation', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 32:1 (Winter 2002), p.6; For appropriation as a manifestation of imperial power, see Said, *Orientalism*; Gayatri Spivak, 'Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography', 1st publ. 1985, reprinted in *The Spivak Reader,* ed. by Donna Landry and Gerald MacLean (New York and London: Routledge, 1996), p.203; Craig Owens, 'Representation, Appropriation, and Power', reprinted in *Beyond Recognition: Representation, Power, and Culture*, ed. by Scott Bryson et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp.88-113; for the creative potential of cultural appropriation, see Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture,* 1st publ. 1994 (New York: Routledge, 2012); Mary Louise Pratt, *Under Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992); Ashley and Plesch, 'The Cultural Processes of Appropriation', pp.1-15

on the Imperial centre.[5] Historians Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose argue in their 2006 anthology *At Home with the Empire* that, in spite of Britain's expanding presence in other territories, the Empire simply became part of everyday life at home, infusing it 'with an Imperial presence'.[6] A good example, cited in Joanne de Groot's essay 'Metropolitan desires and colonial connections', is the images of 'Sultanesses' and 'Indian Queens' that were used on eighteenth-century shop signboards to advertise high-quality linen drapers.[7] These images, she argues, offered a 'repertoire of commercial and public representations' of the colony, thus bringing the 'colonial exotic into everyday ideas and experiences in Britain'.[8]

From the mid-eighteenth century, the British enacted a form of cultural appropriation when they began incorporating the Indian Cashmere shawl into their cultural milieu. The appropriateness of this action, and the consequences for the Indian weaving industry, have been

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[5] Jonathan Hart, 'Translating and Resisting Empire: Cultural Appropriation and Postcolonial Studies', *Borrowed Power,* ed. by Ziff and Rao, p.137

[6] Hall and Rose, *At Home with the Empire*, pp.2, 30

[7] Joanne de Groot, 'Metropolitan desires and colonial connections: reflections on consumption and empire', *At Home with the Empire*, p.187. For signboards see Ambrose Heal, *The Signboards of Old London Shops,* (London: 1947)

[8] de Groot, 'Metropolitan desires and colonial connections', p.187

discussed elsewhere.[9] This thesis is focused on the meanings generated by the shawl's assimilation into British culture and how this Indian garment became a sign of British identity and status over the following century. Its appropriation should be understood as a *process* that was integral to the shawl's formation over time as a signifying status symbol.

Part One reveals changes in the symbolic meaning associated with the shawl in Britain as the garment became assimilated. As a process rather than a singular act, cultural appropriation generates different meanings for an object as it moves from one aspect of that process to the next. Its progression is not necessarily linear and the object may generate multiple meanings at one time; however, there is an overarching movement from an Indian to a British object. Anthropologist Hans Peter Hahn defines appropriation as 'the process by which objects of the same material form change from "commodities", to "personal goods"'.[10] In artworks depicting the Indian Cashmere shawl, this ownership is

[9] Maskiell, 'Consuming Kashmir', pp.48-52

[10] Hans Peter Hahn, 'Global Goods and the Process of Appropriation', *Between Resistance and expansion: Dimensions of Local Vitality in Africa*, ed. by Peter Probst and Gerd Spittler (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2004), pp.211-29

artistically implied, even if the shawl is supplied by the artist rather than the sitter or by the artist's drapery painters.

Hahn proposes a four-phase progression through which objects pass when they are appropriated: 'material appropriation', followed by 'objectification', 'incorporation' and, finally, 'transformation'.[11] At the material level, appropriation describes the 'transition' undergone by an object from a commercial commodity to an object with 'personal value'.[12] Objectification is how that personal object is classified within the 'local universe of things' and becomes 'subject to a socially determined "objectivity"'.[13] The term 'incorporation' refers to the socially determined ways the object should be used and what effect the object has on the owner. As Hahn clarifies, 'one's perception of one's own body changes through the use of the object', a process particularly prevalent with sartorial objects.[14] The last phase sees the object transformed into an 'autonomous' entity that has been 'integrated into the local context' and has become part of either the 'individual or collective possessions' of a

[11] Hahn, 'Global Goods and the Process of Appropriation', p.211
[12] Ibid, p.220
[13] Ibid
[14] Ibid, p.221

culture. Through transformation the object's meaning is locally defined and its references to its origins, and particularly its meaning within its original culture, are limited. This does not, however, necessarily negate its provenance. As Hahn notes, often a 'society lives quite well with the paradox of knowing an object's provenance as a global good, yet simultaneously considering it something of its own'. [15]

Hahn's theory provides a useful framework within which to unravel the complex processes of the Indian Cashmere shawl's appropriation and to understand how it became such a powerful symbol of British femininity, and also what those processes reveal about the complexity of social status and the display of respectability in British visual culture.

[15] Ibid, p.222

CHAPTER 1

An object of mutability: the Indian Cashmere shawl in eighteenth-century Britain

The root of evil, avarice,
That dam'd ill-natur'd baneful vice,
Was slave to prodigality,
That noble sin; whilst luxury
Employ'd a million of the poor,
And odious pride a million more:
Envy itself, and vanity,
Were Ministers of industry;
Their darling folly, fickleness,
In diet, furniture, and dress,
That strange ridic'lous vice, was made
The very wheel that turn'd the trade.
Their laws and clothes were equally
Objects of mutability![1]

[1] Bernard Mandeville, 'The Grumbling Hive: or, Knaves Turn'd Honest', *The Fable of the Bees: or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits. With an Essay on Charity and Charity-Schools and A Search into the Nature of Society,* 3rd edn (London: J. Tonson, 1724), pp.10-1

In describing luxury clothing as 'objects of mutability' in his 1705 poem *The Grumbling Hive: or, Knaves Turn'd Honest*, the London physician and political philosopher Bernard Mandeville encapsulates how certain material things offer a degree of fluidity to the visual display of identity and status.[2] Luxuries motivate social mobility, his poem suggests, which in turn stimulates the perpetual motion of industry toward progress.[3] Like many commentators of the age, Mandeville associates luxury with vice; however, he insists that envy, pride, greed and vanity drove the 'very wheel that turn'd the trade' which had positioned Britain as one of the foremost economies in Europe.[4] Mandeville thus proposes that these innate human characteristics, which manifest in self-fashioning, social climbing and the display of worth through outward appearance, perform an essential role in constructing a social and economic system that benefits all.[5]

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[2] *The Grumbling Hive* was first published in 1705. It was incorporated in to *The Fable of the Bees* in 1714, which included 'Remarks', a prose commentary on the poem. Between 1723 and 1732 a number of editions of the *Fables* were published with additions such as 'A vindication of the Book' (1729) and *A Letter to Dion* (1732) in which Mandeville defends his work against an attack in George Berkeley, 'Alciphron', *The Works of George Berkeley*, ed. by Alexander Campbell Fraser (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1871)

[3] Mandeville, 'The Grumbling Hive', pp.10-1; For remarks on wearing 'rich Cloaths' see p.134

[4] Ibid, p.10

[5] Ibid, p.11

For many of his detractors Mandeville's argument was outrageous. Its importance, however, should not be underestimated as it ignited a well-documented controversy concerning the consequences of the increased consumption of luxury goods that became a key issue in eighteenth-century intellectual discourse.[6] As the historians Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger argue, these debates were not simplistic; they did not develop from 'disapprobation to endorsement of luxury'.[7] Rather, spanning the century, from the critic John Dennis and philosopher Francis Hutcheson to the philosophers David Hume and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, luxury debates were 'dialectical' and pan-European, drawing in particular on French political philosophy.[8] They centred, as Berg and

[6] For a critique of Mandeville's *Fables,* see Francis Hutcheson*, Reflections Upon Laughter, and Remarks Upon the Fable of the Bees* (Glasgow: Urie, 1750); While Mandeville's contemporaries interpreted his poem as an apology for luxury, recent scholarship has argued that his attitude toward luxury is far more ambivalent, even highly critical, than previously thought, see Brandon P. Turner, 'Mandeville against Luxury', *Political Theory,* 44:1 (2015), pp.25-52

[7] Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods,* 2nd edn. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p.7. Berg and Eger offer a useful compendium of the luxury debates in their introduction. See also Christopher J. Berry, *The Idea of Luxury: A Conceptual and Historical Investigation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), John Sekora, *Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett* (Baltimore & London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1977)

[8] John Dennis, *An Essay upon Publick Spirit; being a Satyr in Prose upon the Manners and Luxury of the Times, The Chief Sources of our present Parties and Divisions* (London: Bernard Lintot, 1711); Hutcheson*, Reflections Upon Laughter*; David Hume, 'Of Refinement in the Arts' [originally published as 'Of Luxury' 1752], *Essays and Treatise on Several Subjects*, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Cadell and Davie, 1809), I, Part II, Essay II, pp.285-98; for French debates see

Eger write, 'on questions of individual and national virtue, economic expansion and canons of taste, definitions of the self and the social redistribution of wealth'.[9]

Particularly relevant to this chapter was the conflation of luxury dress with notions of self-fashioning, masquerading and disguise, as well as the expression of individuality through authentic cultural association.[10] As sociologist Richard Sennett demonstrates in *The Fall of Public Man* (1977), mid-eighteenth century urban society was generally regulated by well-defined dress codes that signalled rank and occupation.[11] Although these codes were still legally binding under extant sumptuary laws, they were no longer officially enforced; yet in big urban centres such as London, dressing to one's station was voluntarily exercised as a way of making sense of the frequent encounters one had with strangers in public spaces.[12] In this sense, Sennett argues, the body

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Jeremy Jennings, 'The Debate about Luxury in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century French Political Thought', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 68:1 (January 2007), pp.79-105

[9] Berg and Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century,* p.7

[10] By 'authentic cultural association' I mean an association with a culture other than one's own, gained through an authentic lived experience, such as growing up in a foreign culture

[11] Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man,* 1st publ. 1977 (London: Penguin, 2002), pp.65-66

[12] Ibid, p.66

was like a mannequin, which was dressed to signal class appropriately, rather than individuality. The purpose of clothes, Sennett argues, was 'not to be sure of whom you were dealing with, but to be able to behave as if you were sure'.[13] Self-fashioning was the conscious act of framing oneself using these dress codes, and other social norms or conventions of behaviour such as politeness, as a barometer of esteem and acceptance within a particular social set.[14] As Kate Retford argues, 'self-fashioning appeals to the expectations of others and relies on collusion, co-operation and consensus'.[15] As such, codes and norms could be manipulated, exploited or even challenged to suggest or falsely claim rank, thus obliging society to respond appropriately to the rank presented when in public spaces.

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[13] Ibid, p.68

[14] Throughout the eighteenth century codes of behavior were determined by the rules of politeness. For some, politeness led to insincerity and the concealment of truth, by using the gloss of manners to gain advantage and social advancement, thus threatening moral hierarchies. By the end of the century the notion of sensibility, which advocated more openly expressed inner virtues and authenticity, challenged the ridged patterns of politeness. For a concise summary of the debates, see Kate Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life: Family Portraiture in Eighteenth-century England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), pp.58-9; For more extensive discussions on politeness and sensibility, see John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London: 1997), pp.98-118

[15] Retford, *Art of Domestic Life,* p.10

The masquerade ball, on the other hand, allowed people to completely break out of their class parameters, to present the antithesis of their real self but also to express individuality, to generate intrigue and delight as well as to create mystery and uncertainty. Eighteenth-century opponents of ostentation and luxury frequently argued that dressing in disguise in luxurious costumes seemed to have crossed the boundary of the masked ball and spilled over into everyday life.[16] Mandeville's so-called 'objects of mutability', which allowed men and women to be esteemed 'not as what they are, but what they appear to be', were thus seen to have a corrupting effect on social order by facilitating spurious self-fashioning and social masquerading.[17] Luxury consumption therefore became embroiled in discussions about ethics and morality, and virtue and vice, which threatened to obfuscate the appreciation of objects for their aesthetic or material qualities. The man or woman who used luxury

[16] For an image of the metropole as a city of masks and masquerading, see Tobias Smollett, *The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom*, 2 vols (London, 1753), I, p.232; Erasmus Jones argues that 'people make themselves ridiculous when they appear in *Masque,* and […] strive to seem what they really are not, and to think themselves best drest [*sic*] when they are least known', see Erasmus Jones, *Luxury, Pride, and Vanity, the Bane of the British Nation* (London: J. Roberts, 1735), p.11

[17] These words are Mandeville's, however, Erasmus Jones plagiarises his 'Remarks' to put forward the opposing view, see Mandeville, 'Remarks', *Fables of the Bees,* p.131 and Jones, *Luxury, Pride, and Vanity*, p.12

clothing to appear from a higher social station was the most reviled. He or she was seen as a social climber, or *arriviste,* whose 'ultimate goal', encapsulated by the words of the philosopher Max Scheler:

> is not to acquire a thing of value, but to be more highly esteemed than others. He merely uses the 'thing' as an indifferent occasion for overcoming the oppressive feeling of inferiority which results from his constant comparisons.[18]

This chapter argues that the Indian Cashmere shawl was just such a luxurious 'thing', which men and women from outside the mainstream British establishment appropriated as a means to gain social esteem. These men and women were the *nabobs*, *nabobinas*, courtesans, actors and merchant wives, who had the means to obtain luxury goods but lacked the pedigree of an established social rank.[19] They all found expression and meaning in the visual display of Eastern exoticism, and the Indian Cashmere shawl offered an object which was versatile, both in

[18] Max Scheler, *Ressentiment*, ed. by Lewis A. Coser, trans. by William W. Holdheim (New York: Schocken Books, 1961), p.55

[19] East India Company officials gained the sobriquet *nabob* due to their tendency to dress and behave in the opulent style of the *nawabs* (Indian noblemen) of India. The term *Nabobina* is interchangeable with *nabobini* and *nobobess*. All three were used in the eighteenth century to describe Englishwomen, who were usually wives or daughters of East India Company officials.

form and meaning; it could be worn by both men and women, was associated with exotic foreign royalty, suggested worldliness, excited passion and promoted status. For these men and women, breaking away from conventional dress codes through association with the exotic East, whether those associations were real or not, and gaining celebrity through portraiture was a means of gaining access to the powerful and the privileged in Britain.

This argument is demonstrated through the analysis of three portraits by Joshua Reynolds produced between 1761 and 1782. *Captain John Foote* (1761–4) (Fig. 1.1), *Mrs Horton, later Viscountess Maynard* (1769) (Fig. 1.2) and *Mrs Baldwin* (1782) (Fig. 1.3) are paintings that mark a seminal moment in the European appropriation of the Indian Cashmere shawl and reveal the formative meaning associated with its display. These images demonstrate that the shawl was a mutable object. It was worn as part of an authentic Indian dress, but also incorporated into a generic Eastern costume used in portraiture and at masquerade balls. These formative interpretations of the shawl are crucial for understanding how the shawl became assimilated into fashionable dress over the course of the late eighteenth century. As the first in-depth study of the Indian

Cashmere shawl in British visual culture between 1760 and the end of the eighteenth century, this chapter also challenges the inaccurate or speculative narratives offered by scholars to date regarding the shawl's appropriation by Europeans in the eighteenth century. Before analysing the significance of Reynolds's artworks it is therefore necessary to outline the narratives thus far presented.

* * *

In his influential work *Shawls,* published in 1955, textile historian John Irwin accurately pinpoints the 1760s as the decade in which the Indian Cashmere shawl first appeared in London.[20] Furthermore, he suggests the conduit for this introduction was a *nabobina,* Eliza Draper, the charismatic Anglo-Indian[21] wife of an East India Company official, who visited England between 1764 and 1767.[22] While it is reasonable to assume that Draper might well have owned Indian Cashmere shawls, given that she had just returned from India. Furthermore, her lover, the

[20] Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawl*, p.19

[21] The term 'Anglo-Indian' is used in this thesis to describe men and women of British heritage who were either born in India or reside there for many years

[22] Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawl*, p.19

celebrated writer Laurence Sterne, called her '*La Belle Indian*' or his '*Bramine*', implying that she wore Indian garments.[23] Yet, however tantalising, the evidence Irwin offers is purely speculative. He cites Sterne's outpouring of inflamed passion in *Journal to Eliza,* published in 1767, in which the author exclaims, 'I kiss your Picture—your Shawl and every trinket I exchanged with You—every day I live—alas!'[24] While this moment of romantic expression has been considered by a number of subsequent scholars as the earliest account of the Indian Cashmere shawl in Western Europe, Sterne's lamentation is devoid of any details about the material attributes or provenance of Draper's shawl.[25] The only other reference to a shawl appears in an undated, and unauthenticated letter, allegedly from Sterne to Draper, which was published after her death in 1779 by the notorious forger William Coombe, known for fabricating letters between well-known individuals for his own financial gain.[26]

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[23] Laurence Sterne, *Journal to Eliza and Various Letters,* (New York: J.F. Taylor & Co, 1904), see 'Letter VI' pp.29-31 and 'Letter III', p.17

[24] Ibid*,* p.132

[25] For scholars who accepted Irwin's speculation, see Penelope Alfrey, 'The Social Background to the Shawl', Clabburn, *The Norwich Shawl*, p.25; Maskiell, 'Consuming Kashmir', pp.37; Rizvi and Ahmed, *Pashmina*, p.219, Rizvi acknowledges that Sterne's letter is not conclusive but argues that it is 'reasonable to assume' the shawl is an Indian Cashmere.

[26] *Letters Supposed to have been Written by Yorick and Eliza* (1779), published in Sterne, 'Letter X', *Journal to Eliza*, pp.44-45; The absence of original manuscripts and the reputation of

Furthermore, the letter offers no specific material definition of the 'shaul' mentioned.

Portraits of Draper, produced between 1766 and her death in 1778, are equally unenlightening regarding her shawl. Richard Cosway (Fig. 1.4) and John Raphael Smith (Fig. 1.5) both represent her as a quintessential eighteenth-century Englishwoman, with Rococo-style accoutrements and powdered hair. In two other portraits Draper is styled in more exotic terms but again, the Cashmere shawl is absent. The first is unattributed and untraced, and according to Sterne was commissioned in 1767 by the Newnham family.[27] Sterne writes to Draper, describing the painting: '[It is] a picture for the world, you are dressed in smiles, with all the advantages of silks, pearls, and ermine.'[28] This suggests her costume is in the *turquerie* dress style, evident in paintings such as Jonathan Richardson's *Portrait of Mary Wortley Montagu* (*c*.1726) (Fig. 1.6), a style immensely popular for portraits of British travellers to the Ottoman

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William Coombe has led to much speculation over their authenticity, see W.G. Day, 'Letters from Yorick to Eliza, 1775', *Laurence Sterne Trust,* <http://www.laurencesternetrust.org.uk/wp/precious-cargo/letters-from-yorick-and-eliza/essay> accessed 14 February 2016

[27] Arthur H. Cash, *Laurence Sterne: The Later Years,* (London: Methuen, 1992), p.274

[28] Sterne, 'Letter VI', *Journal to Eliza*, p.29

Empire who enjoyed displaying their knowledge and experience of the exotic *terra incognita.* These early eighteenth-century portraits inspired a more generic Oriental style popular in portraits from the 1750s, which was integrated into fashionable dress.[29] John Downman's portrait of Draper, *A Lady surprised to have found her name written on a Tree* (Fig. 1.7), which was begun in the last year of Draper's life, uses the style *à la turque* to full effect and includes a loosely draped 'mauve cloak', but not an Indian Cashmere shawl.[30]

The conspicuous absence of any Indian Cashmere shawl in Draper's portraits, and a lack of clarity in Sterne's written accounts, makes Irwin's suggestion unstable. Those scholars who have chosen to repeat his narrative have mostly dispensed with the intervening years and moved directly from the 1760s to discuss the shawl trade at the end of the century.[31] Historian Nupur Chaudhuri, for example, acknowledges that it

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[29] Aileen Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France 1750–1820*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1995), pp.222-3; In the early eighteenth century there was a strong European presence in the Ottoman Empire, which included Greece. Places like Constantinople and Smyrna were teaming with both merchants and diplomats who facilitated the flow of goods and ideas back to Britain.

[30] *Important English Pictures: 13 July 1984*, sales catalogue (London: Christie, Mason & Woods, 1984), pp.160-1

[31] Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawls*, pp.12-13; Chaudhuri, 'Shawls, Jewelry, Curry, and Rice', pp.232-3; Caroline Karpinski, 'Kashmir to Paisley', *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* (1963), p.121;

was in the mid-eighteenth century that 'British men returning from India introduced shawls from Kashmir to Britain', yet she follows up this statement with a description of typical Regency, rather than mid-eighteenth-century, dress and also suggests the shawls were exclusive to wealthy women:

> The Kashmir shawl, as it provided extra warmth, became a desirable accompaniment to dresses for wealthy British women, who often wore shortsleeve, low-cut dresses made of light-weight cotton or muslin. Genuine Kashmir shawls were expensive, costing between seventy and one hundred pounds each in the 1810s. Since the cost of an Indian shawl was so high, its market was limited to wealthy women.[32]

Historian Chitralekha Zutshi states that the shawl 'did not become an essential fashion accessory for British women until the turn of the nineteenth century', while literary historian Suzanne Daly argues that it was 'first associated in Europe with French noblewomen' but 'became popular with English women by the 1820s'.[33] Other scholars have chosen

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Rock *Paisley Shawls*, p.9; Janet Rizvi offers the most accurate yet short explanation of the shawl's changing status from an object that 'conveyed the ineffable aura of the Mysterious East' to its adaptation as a fashionable accessory for the 'antique' style of the Romantic movement, see Rizvi, *Pashmina,* pp.219-21

[32] Chaudhuri, 'Shawls, Jewelry, Curry, and Rice', pp.232-3

[33] Zutshi, 'Designed for eternity', p.423; Daly, *The Empire Inside*, pp.12-3

to concentrate on the shawl's extraordinary popularity within the French court at the end of the eighteenth century, crediting the French Emperor Napoleon and Empress Josephine with initiating the fashion for Indian Cashmere shawls in Europe.[34]

The work of twentieth- and twenty-first-century scholars, while providing invaluable insight into the rich history of the production, trade and cultural significance of Indian Cashmere shawls in India, has obscured our understanding of the shawl's appropriation and assimilation into the cultural milieu of eighteenth-century Britain. This chapter aims to show that it was the *arriviste* rather than the aristocrat who introduced the Indian Cashmere shawl into British society and that it was an object which offered mutability to both men and women in how they displayed status in portraiture.

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[34] Ames, *Woven Masterpieces*, p.226; Ames, *The Kashmir Shawl*, p.135

For artists like Reynolds the *arriviste* provided a means to engage with luxury debates, both in the formulation of his ideas on art and beauty, and especially in his endeavour to promote his own talent and skills to potential patrons.[35] As art historian Martin Postle writes, Reynolds was both 'the doyen of high culture' and 'keenly attentive to the vagaries of fashion and the less salubrious aspects of high society—the *demi-monde*'.[36] The artist's persistent play on representations of respectable women against those of courtesans and actresses is evident in how he orchestrated displays at the Royal Academy exhibitions.[37] In Reynolds's portraits of beautiful women ambivalence in social status is achieved through his understanding of fashion and by dressing his subjects in clothing that blurred the standard codes of status. Reynolds used this ambiguity to present aristocratic women and courtesans in the same clothing and poses. These portraits thus offered a simultaneous view

[35] Robert W. Jones, *Gender and the Formation of Taste in Eighteenth-Century Britain: The Analysis of Beauty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p.129

[36] *Joshua Reynolds: The Creation of Celebrity,* exh. cat., ed. by Martin Postle (London: Tate Publishing, 2005), p.181

[37] Jones, *Formation of Taste*, pp.117-52

of women as exotic queens, sexually available woman and fashionable beauties.[38]

Reynolds was well known for his awareness of the prevailing trends in fashionable society. As Postle notes, he may have spent his days in the studio, but by night he socialised with the *ton,* gossiping and observing the 'theatre of life' unfolding at the masquerade balls, clubs and theatres of London, where the old establishment rubbed shoulders with the *arriviste.*[39] Reynolds translated some of the drama of fancy dress into the fashionable costumes worn by his sitters. The importance of this fusion in dress, particularly in relation to female sitters, is highlighted in Jonathan Richardson's ***Essay on the Theory of Painting*** (1715)—much admired by Reynolds—when he writes that 'ordinary habits' worn by sitters on arrival at the studio were 'but an ill air' in paintings.[40] The portrait painter was required to introduce established ideals of sartorial elegance in the form of 'something purely arbitrary'. Reynolds and his drapery painters used an array of dresses and accoutrements to achieve the right

[38] Cindy McCreery, *The Satirical Gaze: Prints of Women in Late Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), p.89

[39] Martin Postle, 'The Theatre of Life', *Creation of Celebrity*, p.199

[40] Jonathan Richardson, *An Essay on the Theory of Painting,* 1st publ. 1715 (London: 1725), pp.196-7

balance, and some of the more recognisable items are repeated across a large number of portraits.[41] A heavily ruched blue silk dress, for example, with matching stomacher adorned with a row of ribbon bows, and sleeves with multi-layered lace *engageantes*, is used in his portraits *Gertrude, Duchess of Bedford* (1756) (Fig. 1.8) and *Mrs James Fortescue, née Mary Henrietta Hunter* (1757) (Fig. 1.9), among others. An ermine-trimmed stole is used in the portraits *Elizabeth Kerr, Marchioness of Lothian,* (1769) (Fig 1.10) and *Mrs Thomas Watkinson Payler* (1771) (Fig 1.11), among others. With the popularity of masquerade balls in the mid-eighteenth century, including the taste for Eastern costumes—mostly *à la turque* from Constantinople—Reynolds began to incorporate a generic orientalised style into some of his portraits from the 1750s. This usually consisted of a turban adorned with pearls or an aigrette, an unstructured wrap-bodice dress with a waist sash, and an ermine-trimmed cloak or stole. His

[41] Many of his subjects were dresses in more arbitrary loose flowing drapery drawn from the tradition of classical sculpture, which he advocated for portraying a more 'general idea' of elegance, see Joshua Reynolds, *Sir Joshua Reynolds's Discourses,* ed. by Edward Gilpin Johnson (Chicago: A.C. McClurg and Company, 1891), see 'Discourse IV', pp.99-121 and 'Discourse VII', p.181

portraits *The Hon. Mrs John Barrington* (c.1758) (Fig 1.12) and *Mrs Jodrell* (1774–6) (Fig 1.13) both display this generic styling.

There are notable exceptions among Reynolds's work to the generically styled drapery and repeated accessories; portraits that stand out for clearly representing unique costumes supplied by the sitter, which are not to be found repeated across Reynolds's oeuvre.[42] One such outfit is the exquisite Mughal costume brought to Reynolds's studio by Captain John Foote, the very ensemble in which the Indian Cashmere shawl was first introduced to British visual culture in 1761. On his return to England, Foote, an old friend and neighbour of Reynolds from Plymouth, commissioned the artist to portray him wearing the attire of a Mughal prince, a costume that he had brought back from India.[43] Research undertaken for this thesis suggests that *Captain John Foote* (1761) (Fig. 1.1) includes the earliest representation of the Indian Cashmere shawl by a European artist produced on European soil. As recorded in Reynolds's

[42] The costumes in the pendant portraits of *Rev. William Lloyd* and *Mrs William Lloyd* (1757) are a good example, which art and dress historian Eileen Ribeiro suggests are likely masquerade costumes, Eileen Ribeiro, *The Dress worn at Masquerades in England, 1703–90, and its Relation to Fancy Dress in Portraiture*, (New York: Garland, 1984), pp.221, 229

[43] *The Raj: India and the British 1600-*1947, exh. cat., ed. by Christopher A. Bayly (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1990), pp.110-1

appointment book, Foote sat between 12 February and 17 April 1761 and paid 40 guineas for the painting.[44] His outfit, comprising a white turban with gold-tipped aigrette, a white muslin *jama,* or surcoat, embroidered with large gold and green silk *butas,* and a pale cotton *patka* with flattened silver-gilt wire and heavily embroidered *buta* in silk, has survived and is housed in the York City Gallery collection along with the painting (Fig. 1.14).[45] The original shawl has not survived. However, the design in the painting is characteristic of the *chand-dar* or moon shawl, a style of Indian Cashmere shawl woven in the 1750s, which is square in format, has a central medallion containing an intricate *buta* design and has repeat quarter medallions in each corner connected by the *hashiya* or border pattern (Fig. 1.15).[46] Captain Foote's shawl has a pale ground patterned all over with small *butis* and a thin decorative *hashiya*. Although the central medallion is not visual, a quarter medallion in

[44] David Mannings, *Sir Joshua Reynolds: A Complete Catalogue of his Paintings* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), p.198

[45] In design terms, the *patka* provided a design precedent for the long Cashmere shawl's structure of end *pallas* and side *hashiyas*, as well as the development of the Mughal floral motifs that would become the *buta* motif associated with the Cashmere shawl, see Spurr, 'The Kashmir Shawl: Style and Markets', pp.33-6

[46] Mildred Archer, *India and British Portraiture*, 1770–1825 (New York: Philip Watson, 1979), pp.410-1

the corner is just discernable. A *chand-dar* shawl of this kind can be seen in Thomas Gainsborough's portrait *Katherine Hingeston,* painted two decades later around 1787 (Fig. 1.16). Cohen suggests that the shawl was an 'heirloom', therefore confirming the likelihood that it was from the 1750s.[47]

In Reynolds's large, half-length portrait, Foote stands serene and dignified in front of a billowing rust-coloured curtain, his right hand positioned on the handle of his walking stick, while the left rests on the *patka* around his waist. He has adopted a standard pose for portraits of Indian *nawabs,* or noblemen, used by British artists working in India in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, such as George Willison's *Muhammad Ali Khan, Nawab of Arcot,* produced in Madras (*c.*1770) (Fig. 1.17), Thomas Hickey's *Azim-ud-daula, Nawab of the Carnatic, and his son, Azam Jah* (1803) (Fig. 1.18), and Robert Home's *Ghazi-ud-din Haidar, Nawab (later King) of Oudh, produced in Lucknow* (*c.*1814) (Fig. 1.19). Foote's appropriation of this stance, in conjunction with his princely costume, is calculated to impress with its splendour and to tantalise with its

[47] Cohen, *Kashmir Shawls: The Tapi Collection*, p.180

exoticism. The painting can only be read as a deliberate attempt to enhance his reputation for an upper-class audience who regularly followed the work of Reynolds at public exhibitions, in visits to the artist's studio and gallery, and through the mezzotint reproductions disseminated through London print shops.[48]

Foote's intention was no doubt to belie his real status, which as the son of the Revd Josiah Foote, the Rector of Antony and Kingsteignton in Devonshire, lacked the pedigree for admission into the upper circles of British society.[49] To compound his insecurity, and despite his rank of Captain in the East India Company's Bombay Marine, Foote would not have been officially permitted to exercise military status outside of East India Company territory. As art historian Karen Stanworth argues, unlike British Army officers, whose military status was 'a stable identifier at home', Company officers were 'territorially bound'.[50]

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[48] Hallett, *Reynolds: Portraiture in Action* (London and New York: Yale University Press, 2014), pp.133-61; for more on Reynolds and mezzoprints, see Tim Clayton, ''Figures of Fame': Reynolds and the Printed Image', *Creation of Celebrity,* pp.49-60

[49] Mannings, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, p.198

[50] Karen Stanworth, 'Historical Relations: Representing Collective Identities. Small group portraiture in eighteenth-century England, British India, and America' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Manchester, 1994), pp.149-50

> The Company officer had to resign his commission when he left India, even if he was going home on 'leave'. If he planned to return to India to resume his posting, his plans were subject to the Company wishing to take him back on and was always subject to availability.[51]

Foote's title of 'captain' was, strictly speaking, worth nothing on home soil, and he was therefore forced to look to self-fashioning in order to project rank and authority. To this end he has chosen to draw on his connections with the East and portray himself as Anglo-Indian nobility.

As with many other merchant sailors and soldiers of the East India Company who developed a taste for the opulent splendour of the life of the Indian *nawab*, Foote had returned home with all the accoutrements of an Indian prince. By commissioning a portrait of himself presented in this attire, he not only commemorates his time in India, but also uses his India-acquired wealth, exotic connections and assumed noble airs to make inroads into high society, a point made all the more explicit through the elaborate acanthus leaf, gilded frame which cost Foote £3.13s.6d.[52] The whole ensemble is intended to position Captain Foote

[51] Ibid

[52] Mannings, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, p.198

alongside the distinguished peers of the realm who lined galleries of worthies up and down the country.

Foote's strategy was a gamble, however, as his commission coincided with that great eighteenth-century man of letters, Horace Walpole, striking the first blow against *nabobs*, perceiving them to 'attack every borough' with their interloping.[53] Over the next two decades, the likes of Captain Foote would swell the numbers of those *arrivistes* whom historian James Raven calls the 'assumptive gentry', but particularly those *nabobs* who used their Indian wealth to buy political favour and property previously the preserve of the aristocracy.[54] To a domestic audience, and particularly to the aristocracy themselves, the same material objects used by *nabobs* and their wives to flaunt exotic adventures and decorate their new country estates were 'unsettling

[53] 'Walpole to Mann, 3 March 1761'and 'Walpole to Mann, 23 July 1761' *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, ed. Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis et al., 48 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937–1984), XXI, pp.484; 518 <http://images.library.yale.edu/hwcorrespondence/> accessed 20 February 2016

[54] James Raven uses the phrase 'assumptive gentry' to describe the 'three *arriviste* types: planters, manufacturers, and nabobs', James Raven, *Judging New Wealth: Popular Publishing and Responses to Commerce in England, 1750–1800* (New York and Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp.221-22, n1

declarations of the imbrication of Britain and India, empire and nation'.[55] In the same way that the overlapping folds of Indian textiles masked Foote's real identity in the portrait, so, for many, Britain appeared to be covered by layers of India. As the historian Tillman Nechtman argues, foreign objects appeared to clutter and confuse the domestic landscape.[56] Worse still, he writes, they seemed to 'chart an inversion of the entire global process of imperialism', bringing India home rather than imposing Britain on India:

> These objects marginalized the comfortable, domestic, and British world, replacing it with luxurious objects from imperial India. Rather than shoring up the hierarchical difference between nation and empire, the [*nabob's*] collections [of Indian goods] made him seem foreign to domestic eyes. [57]

It was specifically the 'shawls and diamonds', those immediate and dazzling displays of Indian luxury, argues Nechtman, that reminded

[55] Tillman W. Nechtman, *Nabobs: Empire and Identity in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p.146
[56] Ibid
[57] Ibid

those at home of the great fortunes these *nabobs* were making against a backdrop of political and financial instability both at home and abroad.[58]

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In the 1760s and 1770s the *nabob* and *nabobina* were the main conduits for the Indian Cashmere shawl to Britain. The earliest record of the Indian Cashmere shawl in a London newspaper, in the *Gazetteer and Daily Advertiser* dated Monday, 25 November 1776, makes clear that the *nabobina* was in London with Indian Cashmere shawls. It appears in a notice from the Bow Street Public Office reporting the theft of 'an East India Lady's Shawl, of a white colour, and blue sprigs round the border', offering a ten guinea reward for its recovery.[59] These details confirm the shawl's characteristics as those of a *kani*-woven, *buta*-patterned shawl from that period, designed in what textile historian Jeffrey Spurr calls the

[58] Nechtman, *Nabobs*, p.193; For more on *nabobs* and *nabobinas*, see Nechtman, 'Nabobinas: Luxury, Gender, and the Sexual Politics of British Imperialism in India in the Late Eighteenth Century', *Journal of Woman's History*, 18:4 (Winter 2006), pp.8-30; Nicholas Dirks, *The Scandal of Empire: India and the Creation of Imperial Britain* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Peter J. Marshall, *Trade and Conquest: Studies on the Rise of British Dominance in India* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1993); Peter J. Marshall, 'The Private Fortune of Marian Hastings', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 37 (1964), pp.245–53; Holden Furber, *Private Fortunes and Company Profits in the India Trade in the Eighteenth Century* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1997)

[59] 'A Lady's India Shawl', *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (25 November 1776), p.3

'blue mode' (Fig. 1.20).[60] The size of the financial reward for the recovery of the shawl is also significant as it indicates that the item was very valuable. A reward of ten guineas amounts to over £1,200 in today's money.[61] Although the advertisement does not indicate how or in what context the woman was wearing the shawl, it does identify her as an 'East India Lady', in other words a *nabobina* who was most likely the wife or daughter of an East India Company official.

Account records show that East India Company servants were transporting shawls to London from India almost a decade earlier. An inventory list documenting a consignment of treasures shipped back to England in 1767 includes '10 pairs of shawls'.[62] They belonged to Major-General Robert Clive, 1st Baron Clive, Commander-in-Chief of British India, celebrated victor of the Battle of Plassey (1757) and to many, a vilified, ostentatious and interloping *nabob*.[63] None of Clive's shawls has survived; however, they were almost certainly *kani*-woven Indian

[60] Spurr, 'The Kashmir Shawl: Style and Markets', pp.40, 76

[61] Lawrence H. Officer and Samuel H. Williamson, 'Five Ways to Compute the Relative Value of a UK Pound Amount, 1270 to Present,' *MeasuringWorth*, 2016, online at www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/ accessed 15 February 2016

[62] London, British Library: IOR Mss Eur G37/3: *Clive to Lady Clive*, Calcutta, 31 January 1766

[63] Mildred Archer, Christopher Rowell and Robert Skelton, *Treasures from India: The Clive Collection at Powis Castle* (London: Herbert Press, 1987), p.94

Cashmere shawls given their description as 'pairs' or *doshalla.* These were introduced in the sixteenth century by the Mughal Emperor Akbar, who liked to wear two shawls back-to-back to hide the trimmed weft threads so characteristic of *kani* weaving.[64]

Clive's shawls, along with his other treasures and financial gains from India, were said to be worth an obscene amount of money. The *Annual Register for the Year 1760*, under the editorship of Clive's nemesis Edmund Burke, estimates his wealth to be:

> £1,200,000 in cash, bills and jewels; that his lady has a casket of jewels which are estimated at least £200,000. So that he may, with propriety be said to be the richest subject in the three kingdoms.[65]

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[64] There are a number of shawls in the Clive Collection at Powis Castle, however, they have been dated from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and are thought to have belonged to Robert and Margaret Clive's daughter-in-law, Henrietta Herbert; Paired shawls, or *doshalla,* sewn back to back to hide the loose threads characteristic of *kani* handloom weaving, were introduced by the Mughal emperor Akbar in the sixteenth century, see Abu al-Fazl ibn Mubarak, *The A'in-I Akbari*, 1st publ. 16th century, ed. by D.C. Phillott, trans. by H. Blockmann and H.S. Jarrett, 3 vols (Reprint Calcutta edn, 1873. Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1994), I, p.98. See also Spurr, 'The Kashmir Shawl: Style and Markets', p.33. These early *doshalla* consisted of contrasting shawls with no decorative patterns and it was only in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with the development of the *buta* pattern, that *doshalla* 'came to signify pairs of identical shawls.'

[65] *Annual Register, or a View of the History and Politics and Literature for the Year*, 7th edn, ed. by Edmund Burke (London: Dodsley, 1789), p.120

The negative attention on Clive's wealth, while understandably far greater than on Captain Foote's, would nonetheless have tarred Foote with the same brush.

Prior to this period, British merchants in India made their living through trade alone, and, if lucky enough to survive the Indian climate, returned to England and quietly settled down to life as country gentlemen.[66] These merchant citizens had been seen as heroic figures in cultural productions.[67] In the 1760s, however, as the East India Company tried to consolidate its power in India, it underwent an audacious transition from a trading company to an entity with the agency of a state.[68] Merchants were no longer just merchants, and the heady mix of trade negotiations, lucrative contracts and political manoeuvres gave rise to the archetypal *nabob,* who was regarded with suspicion because his precise methods of enrichment were somewhat mysterious.[69] Regardless

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[66] Percival Spear, *Nabobs: Study of the Social Life of the English in Eighteenth-Century India*, 2nd edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1963; repr. London and Dublin: Curzon, 1980), p.37

[67] For more on the 'cit' or citizen merchant, see Elaine M. McGirr, *Eighteenth-Century Characters: A Guide to the Literature of the Age,* (London: Macmillan, 2007), pp.64-76

[68] Philip Lawson, *The East India Company: A History*, (New York: Longman, 1993), p.93

[69] James Holzman, 'The Nabobs in England: a study of the returned Anglo-Indian, 1760–1785' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Columbia University, 1926), p.17; Attempts by the government to rein in the perceived excesses of East India Company officials in the 1770s had failed dismally, until, in 1784, the new government led by William Pitt established the Board of Control with

of his heroic victory at Plassey, the Company's General Court still questioned Clive's 'dirty' money made in India, and the public joined in the fray, asking rhetorically, 'do you think all that [money] was honestly come by?'[70]

In 1772 Clive found himself under investigation for the second time, against the backdrop of the East India Company's dangerously precarious financial situation. With revenues having fallen steadily since 1767, the Company was unable to pay its £400,000 annual dues to the Crown for its trade monopoly, or the £1 million loan the Company had secured from the government earlier in the year.[71] These issues were exacerbated by famine in Bengal and North American boycotts of Company tea. Clive's enormous wealth, when juxtaposed with the potential bankruptcy of many wealthy gentlemen who were heavily invested in the Company, was unacceptable. Public perception of men

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ultimate authority held by the British Crown. For an account on the strength of opposition to the extravagant Anglo-Indian in popular fiction, the media and parliament, see Raven, *Judging New Wealth*, pp.221-48

[70] The *Schemer; or, Universal Satirist,* 26 (13 July 1762), p.202, Clive was investigated on a much smaller scale in 1763 than he would be in 1772–3, see Nechtman, *Nabobs,* pp.81-5

[71] Nechtman, *Nabobs,* pp.18, 81-2. See also *The History of Bengal 1757–1905*, ed. by N. K. Sinha (Calcutta: Calcutta University Press, 1967)

like Clive was thus intimately bound up with the mismanagement of imperial affairs, as well as with anti-imperial attitudes on both an economic and moral level.

Despite his eventual pardon, Clive still came to epitomise the greedy *arriviste* 'corrupted by unfettered access to power, riches and vice in India', thus further fuelling the luxury debates about the moral dangers of foreign goods.[72] As a character, the *nabob*'s vulgar and extravagant conspicuous consumption, and his social presumption with the upper classes in the metropole, were repudiated and satirised.[73] Samuel Foote's play *The Nabob*, one of the best-known cultural productions to portray the ostentatious upstart, was first performed at the Haymarket Theatre on 29 June 1772, at the very time Clive was being charged with fraud. In the play, Lady Oldham's frustration and disgust with a *nabob,* Sir Matthew Mite, captures the sense of invasion against domestic morality wrought by the returning parvenu, with his Oriental spoliation:

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[72] Stephen Gregg, 'Representing the Nabob: India, Stereotypes and Eighteenth-Century Theatre', in *Picturing South Asian Culture in English: Textual and Visual Representations*, ed. by Tasleem Shakur and Karen D'Souza (Liverpool: Open House Press, 2003), p.19; In 1774, less than eighteen months after his inquiry ended, Clive allegedly took his own life, giving the public further reason to vilify him, believing the circumstances of his death proved his guilt, see Nechtman, *Nabobs,* p.130

[73] For theatrical representations of the *nabob,* see Gregg, 'Representing the Nabob', pp.19-31

> At this crisis, preceded by all the pomp of Asia, Sir Matthew Mite, from the Indies, came thundering amongst us; and, profusely scattering the spoils of ruined provinces, corrupted the virtue and alienated the affections of all the old friends to the family.[74]

Writing to the Scottish periodical the *Lounger* in May 1785 under the *nom de guerre* John Homespun, novelist and lawyer Henry Mackenzie raises the same issues as Samuel Foote about Asian luxuries, only in more explicit terms, calling them a 'new plague'.[75] For Homespun, however, the conduit of this epidemic was not the *nabob,* but the *nabobina*. When his neighbours, 'Lord and Lady Mushroom', return from India with a £100,000 fortune and 'a trunk full of fineries', recalling Clive's return two decades earlier, Homespun is dismayed to report that the Mushrooms' obsession with Indian luxuries—which included 'white shawls and red shawls'—had spread to his own wife and daughter.[76] Homespun's fear is not limited to the financial damage Indian fineries might inflict on his pocket. He laments the loss or contamination of good

[74] Samuel Foote, *The Nabob: A comedy in three acts*, (London: Colman, 1778), p.4

[75] Henry Mackenzie, 'Mr John Homespun to the editor', *The Lounger,* 1:17 (28 May 1785), p.151; John Homespun is the *nom de guerre* for Henry Mackenzie, comptroller of taxes for Scotland and author of *The Man of Feeling* (1771)

[76] Mackenzie, 'Homespun', pp.147-8

old British values and 'homespun' products, but, most of all, he worries that the identities of his wife and daughter have been fundamentally altered, thus suggesting the mutable powers of the shawls in relation to identity.[77] In desperation Homespun ends his letter:

> I must try to find out some new place of residence, where Nabobs, Rajahs, and Lacks of Rupees, were never heard of, and where people know no more of Bengal than of the Man in the Moon.[78]

The *nabobina*, Nechtman argues in his recent work on the subject, is positioned at the intersection of numerous debates on Britain's increasing dominion in India, in particular the financial ramifications of imported Asian luxuries and the amount of bullion leaving the British treasury in exchange, and also how those luxuries were contributing to major shifts in social structures and behaviour in the metropole.[79] He argues that it was the *nabobinas* who were seen as producing the 'material manifestations of an imperial presence in domestic Britain', because they were the ones wearing the exotic garments and jewellery

[77] Ibid, p.150

[78] Ibid, p.151

[79] Nechtman, 'Nabobinas', pp.8-30; As Nechtman acknowledges, there were comparatively few *nabobinas* in Britain in comparison to *nabobs*, yet their impact on public debate was disproportionately large

and their perceived 'passion for material consumption' was thought to verge 'dangerously on the edge of immorality'.[80] Unlike Captain Foote, who was unlikely to wear his Mughal outfit for anything other than to pose for a portrait or to attend a masquerade ball, the *nabobina* began to incorporate Indian dress into her everyday attire. The *nabobina* thus produced a hybrid identity, a cross-contamination, that fed into concerns about all forms of self-fashioning that used clothing to mask reality. She was a paradoxical figure; on the one hand she was viewed as exotic and mysterious, the *Belle Indian*, the queen of the ball; yet she was simultaneously dangerous and corrupt, her morals loosened by unregulated colonial spaces, her body wrapped in the ostentatious cloth of the harem. The courtier and novelist Fanny Burney experiences just such a contradiction with the notorious *nabobina* Marian Hastings. She describes with delight her many dinners at the *nabobina*'s table, surrounded by Indian landscapes and eating exotic dishes off fine Indian porcelain. Yet she simultaneously disapproves of Mrs Hastings's 'showy

[80] Nechtman, 'Nabobinas', p.10

dressing and ostentatious display of oriental gems'.[81] These visual reminders of India alert Burney to the *nabobina*'s compromised morality, referring to her voyage over to India when she began relations with Warren Hastings while still married to her first husband. Burney agonised that this, and the 'history of her divorce', would contaminate the Queen when Hastings was presented at court.[82] As Nechtman argues, the Hastings' affair was only possible due to the breakdown of moral codes upon entering the colonial space.[83] The *nabobina* is, therefore, tainted by her association with Empire, and corrupt because, as one observer simply put it, 'She has been in India'.[84]

Fears about the impact of Asian luxury goods, particularly Indian textiles, on both the moral and physical constitution of society were played out in the wider debates on luxury raised by Mandeville's *The Grumbling Hive*. Since the extension of maritime trade and the founding

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[81] Frances Burney, *The Diary and Letters of Frances Burney, Madam D'Arblay*, ed. Sarah Chauncey Woolsey (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1910), 1, p.264. For a more detailed analysis of Fanny Burney's reaction to the 'nabobina' Marian Hasting see Nechtman, 'Nabobinas', pp.8-30

[82] Burney, *Diary and Letters of Frances Burney*, 1, p.264

[83] Nechtman, 'Nabobinas', p.9

[84] The observer is 'Lady Mushroom's' sister-in-law, responding to a letter by 'Mr Homespun' to *The Lounger*, see 'Letter from Marjory Mushroom to the editor of The Lounger, 25 February, 1786', *The Lounger: A Periodical Paper,* 2:58 (1787), p.190

of the East India Company early in the seventeenth century, trade in Oriental consumer goods had brought a whole new dimension to the material culture of Europe, introducing a 'consumer revolution' which stimulated the senses of Europeans with new objects in bright colours and exotic patterns.[85] As the radical author and social commentator Daniel Defoe complained at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Indian textiles in particular had spread from 'lying on the floor' to the 'backs' of British gentlewomen, 'from the foot-cloth to the petticoat'.[86]

> *Chints* [*sic*] *and painted calicoes*, which before were only made use of for carpets, quilts, &c., and to clothe children of ordinary people, became now the dress of our ladies; and such is the power of a mode we saw our persons of quality dressed in Indian carpets. […] It crept into our houses, our closets and bedchambers; curtains, cushions, chairs, and at last beds themselves were nothing but callicoes [*sic*] or Indian stuffs.[87]

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[85] Berg, 'Asian Luxuries and the Making of the European Consumer Revolution', *Luxury in the Eighteenth century*, p.229

[86] Daniel Defoe, *Weekly Review* (31 January 1708), quoted in Edward Baines, *History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain: with a notice of its early history in the East, and in all the quarters of the globe* (London: H. Fisher, R. Fisher, and P. Jackson, 1835), pp.78-9 (emphasis in original); for more on the spread of chintz see Rosemary Crill, *Chintz: Indian Textiles for the West* (London: V&A Publishing, 2008), p16

[87] Defoe, quoted in Baines, *Cotton Manufacture*, p.79

Defoe's language, like that of Mr Homespun, conjures up the spreading of an epidemic that had reached the very heart and most intimate part of the home, the bedchamber. Defoe thus joined the ranks of local weavers whose protests instigated a government ban on the import and use of chintz from 1721 to 1774.[88]

For the dramatist and critic John Dennis, luxuries and the dangers of avarice were intrinsically tied to the notion of foreignness and had a profoundly negative effect on the cultivation of manners.[89] He was particularly concerned about the effeminising effect of Asian luxuries on men and the moral implications for women. He complains that society has lost its former 'extreme Contempt for soft, luxurious, effeminate Arts' and its 'utter Abhorrence for foreign Customs and foreign Fashions, and for those who introduc'd them'.[90] Instead, 'all manner of foreign Customs and foreign Luxury' had been 'introduc'd into this Island' with a devastating loss of 'Publick Manners' that are so vital for 'Publick

[88] Crill, *Chintz,* p.25
[89] Dennis, *An Essay upon Publick,* pp.9-10
[90] Ibid

Spirit'.[91] More specifically, Dennis believed that Indian luxuries had the power to transfer promiscuity from the colonial space into British society; since the arrival of Indian textiles and 'despight of our Climate', he complains, 'our Girls are ripe as soon as those of the *Indies*'.[92]

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The association between promiscuity and Indian luxuries is embedded in a second painting by Reynolds, entitled *Mrs Horton, later Viscountess Maynard* (1769) (Fig. 1.2). The portrait is of the renowned courtesan Nancy Parsons, born Anne Parsons and also known as Mrs Horton. Parsons sat for Reynolds dressed in a quasi-Oriental costume using an Indian Cashmere shawl to create the effect of a turban and *patka*.[93] The shawl's pattern matches those dating from the third quartile of the eighteenth century, the *pallas* decorated with five rows of alternate *butis* made from single sprigs rather than the *millefleur* style in which each *buta* is

[91] Ibid, p.31

[92] Ibid, p.15

[93] First identified as a Kashmiri shawl by Amelia Peck in *Interwoven Globe: The Worldwide Textile Trade, 1500–1800*, exh. cat., ed. by Amelia Peck (London: Thames & Hudson, 2013), pp.267-8

composed of many capitula (Fig. 1.21).[94] In a later portrait, *Anne-Marie-Louise Thélusson, Countess of Sorcy* (1790), by the French artist Jacques-Louis David, this same shawl design is represented in fine detail (Fig.1.22). The materiality of its woven textile and the accuracy of the *butis* are much more keenly observed than in Reynolds's rendering. As Horace Walpole complained, Reynolds was often negligent in 'all kind of finishing', and rather than judiciously investing in the specific character of 'silks, satins, [and] velvets […] Sir Joshua's draperies represent clothes, never their materials'.[95] This is clearly visible in a comparison between the shawls in Reynolds's picture of Parsons and David's portrait of Countess Sorcy. That said, the attention paid by Reynolds to the finer details of the sartorial and ornamental aspects of the painting—the fine lace ruffs at her wrists, the glint on a facet of the diamond brooch, the pearls, each lustrous sphere reflecting the light, and of course the *pallas,* decorated *hashiyas* (side borders) and the threads of the fringe, individually rendered with a fine white brush—are much more distinct

[94] For shawl dating and identification, the most useful study is Spurr, 'The Kashmir Shawl: Style and Markets', pp.30-65

[95] 'Walpole to Mason, 10 February 1783', *Correspondence*, XXIX, pp.284-85

than in many of his other portraits of women dressed *à la turque,* such as the Hon. Mrs Barrington (Fig. 1.12), where the brushstrokes are less defined, the forms less delineated and the fabric more generic. It is possible that Reynolds completed Parsons's portrait himself as his chief assistant, Giuseppe Marchi, had left his employment to launch a solo career in 1768 and only returned to Reynolds later the following year.[96]

Like many of Reynolds's three-quarter and 'kit-cat'-size portraits, Parsons's physical presence is strongly felt by the viewer as she is set against a plain dark background and positioned right on the edge of the picture plane, her skirt spanning the full width of the canvas.[97] The physicality of the composition and the exotic styling of the Indian Cashmere shawl, wound around her head and body, lend an air of sensuality and intimacy to the image, while her slightly averted gaze resists intimacy and instead presents her beauty for contemplation. Her

[96] Timothy Clayton and Anita McConnell, 'Marchi, Giuseppe Filippo Liberati [Joseph] (*c.*1735–1808), painter and engraver.' *ODNB* (3 January 2008, Oxford University Press), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18034>; In Walpole's complaint to Mason about Reynolds's drapery, he also derides the quality of his journeyman's work, presumed to be Marchi, see 'Walpole to Mason, 10 February 1783', *Correspondence*, XXIX, pp.284-5

[97] Kit-Cat size is generally 36 x 28 inch (914 x 711 mm) and included the sitter's head and one hand, see 'Three-quarters, kit-cats and half-lengths': British portrait painters and their canvas sizes, 1625-1850, *National Portrait Gallery* <https://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/artists-their-materials-and-suppliers/> accessed 30 July 2018

face recalls a description of ideal English beauty written by the eighteenth-century artist and theorist André Rouquet in *The Present State of the Arts* (1755):

> she must have a fine white skin, a light complexion, a face rather oval than round, a nose somewhat longish, but of a fine turn, and like the antiques, her eyes large, and not so sparkling as melting; her mouth graceful, without a smile, but rather of a pouting turn, which gives it at once both grace and dignity.[98]

Beauty is only one concern for artists, however, and Rouquet argues that in 'character as well as form' artists should 'draw on excessive decency in manner, in discourse and in dress; a modesty delicate, tempting, and witty, and sometimes an air of innocence extremely engaging'. [99]

Nancy Parsons was anything but innocent or modest, and her history shows that she was clearly a manipulative temptress. Like John Dennis's 'girls that ripe as soon as those of the Indies', Parsons, the daughter of a Bond street tailor, began working at a very young age as a *figurante* in the opera as well as a prostitute, earning, by some accounts,

[98] André Rouquet, *The Present State of the Arts in England* (London: J. Nourse, 1755), pp.46-7
[99] Rouquet, *The Present State of the Arts*, p.47

100 guineas in a single week.[100] After a brief relationship with Mr Haughton (or Horton), a West Indies slave merchant who took her to Jamaica, she returned to London, taking his name and resuming her life of easy virtue as Mrs Horton with the respectable veneer of a married woman. Yet, there is no evidence in Jamaican records that a marriage ever took place between Parsons and Haughton.[101] With her guile, her beauty and her acumen—she was by all accounts very accomplished—she made her way through high society on the arms and in the beds of noblemen, peers and even the 3rd Duke of Grafton, who would become Prime Minister during their sensational five-year affair.[102]

Grafton and Parsons began their relationship in 1764 with an attempt at discretion, with reports that year that he 'lives incognito at Woodford in Essex with Nancy Parsons'; however, the couple had already

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[100] 'Walpole to Mann, 7 November 1771', *Correspondence*, XXIII, p.344, n6; see also A.A. Hanham, 'Parsons, Anne (Nancy) (married name Anne Maynard, Viscountess Maynard) *c.*1735–1814/15', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 26 May 2005), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/75617>

[101] Hanham also points to the 1852–3 edition of the papers of George Grenville which includes a footnote claiming Parsons lived with Haughton before accompanying him to Jamaica, though did not marry him, see Hanham, 'Parsons', *ODNB*

[102] Parsons's lovers included William Petty, 2nd Earl of Shelburne, Augustus Henry FitzRoy, 3rd Duke of Grafton (1735–1811), John Frederick Sackville, 3rd duke of Dorset (1745–99), Francis Russell, 5th Duke of Bedford (1765–1802), and Charles Maynard, 2nd Viscount Maynard (1752–1824), whom she would marry in 1776 when in her forties.

been seen in public in June when he took her to the races.[103] Parsons's reputation was well established and Horace Walpole describes her that same year as 'one of the commonest creatures in London', while judging that her affair with Grafton had 'put an end to all his decorum'.[104] His affair reportedly affected his abilities to govern when, in October 1768, after serving as Secretary of State and First Lord of the Treasury, he began an unsuccessful term as Prime Minister.[105] According to the political commentator Junius, Grafton was negligent of his duties because he was 'in a rural retirement, and in the arms of faded beauty, [having] lost all memory of his Sovereign, his country, and himself'.[106] Nonetheless, the Prime Minister began frequently to 'lead his mistress into public, and even place her at the head of his table', so that she

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[103] 'Barrington to Buckinghamshire, 24 Sept 1764', Norfolk Records Office, Lothian MSS, 252; Peter Durrant, 'FitzRoy, Augustus Henry, third duke of Grafton (1735–1811), prime minister', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 4 October, 2008), <https://doi-org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9628>

[104] 'Walpole to Hertford, 9 September 1764', *Walpole's Correspondence*, XXXVIII, p.435; Grafton and Parsons were also mocked in the press, see 'Harry and Nan: An Elegy, in the Manner of Tibullus', *Political Register, and Impartial Review of New Books,* 2 (1768), p.431

[105] Grafton was acting head of the administration from June 1768 while Prime Minister William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, was ill. He officially became Prime Minister in October 1768 and left office on 30 January 1770, see Durrant, 'Grafton' *ODNB*

[106] Junius, 'Letter XIX: To His Grace the Duke of Grafton, 24 April 1769', *The Letters of the celebrated Junius: A More Complete Edition than any yet Published,* 2 vols (London: 1783), I, pp.83-84

appeared to be the first lady of the land.[107] For Junius, this parading of a courtesan in public was akin to pulling down an ancient temple of Venus in order to 'bury all decency and shame under the ruins'. Grafton's transgressions were not only politically dangerous, they were also an affront to public decency.

Parsons's infamy was widely spread by urbane publications such as *Town and Country Magazine*, the first scandal sheet of the age, which featured the couple in one of its first 'Tête-à-Tête' columns (Fig. 1.23).[108] These were 'rakish biographical sketches featuring illicit amours and intrigues', which satirised the fashionable vices of the day.[109] They included a pair of oval miniature etchings that were often based on portraits by well-known artists such as Reynolds and would therefore be identifiable to the contemporary reader. As the cultural historian Cindy McCreery points out, the magazine had 'an estimated readership of several thousands, and included provincial as well as London readers',

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[107] Junius, 'Letter XXI: To the Printer of the Public Advertiser, 12 June 1769', *Letters*, I, pp.104-5

[108] 'Memoirs of Palinurus and Annabella', *Town and Country Magazine* (March 1769), pp.113-4; Stella Tillyars, ''Paths of Glory': Fame and the Public in Eighteenth-Century London', *Creation of Celebrity,* p.68

[109] Eleanor Drake Mitchell, 'The Tete-à-Tetes in the "Town And Country Magazine" (1769–1793)', *Interpretations*, 9:1 (1977), p.12

potentially spreading Parsons's image more widely than the portraits of even the most famous courtesan of the age, Kitty Fisher.[110]

Behind this satire were real concerns that courtesans like Parsons were penetrating deep into elite society. These fears were realised in Grafton's most brazen public exhibition of Parsons when he escorted her to the opera while Queen Charlotte was in attendance, resulting, as Walpole so expressively writes, in the Duke falling 'into a connection of very ill-odour at Court'.[111] Although the public were 'unaccustomed to resent a mere breach of morality', they were, nonetheless, shocked by Grafton's insult to the Queen and felt that the Duke was setting a 'dangerous precedent' by flaunting his vice in public.[112] It was the very public nature of Grafton's actions that incensed Junius, who wrote to the *Public Advertiser* on June 22, 1769:

> if vice itself could be excused, there is yet a certain display of it, a certain outrage to decency, and violation of public decorum, which, for the benefit of society, should never be forgiven. It is not that [Grafton] kept a

[110] McCreery, *The Satirical Gaze*, p.92

[111] Horace Walpole, *Memoirs of the Reign of King George III,* ed. by G.F. Russell Barker, 4 vols (London: Lawrence and Bullen; New York: G.P. Putnams, 1894), III, p.67, n1

[112] Horace Bleackley, *Ladies Fair and Frail: Sketches of the Demi-monde during the Eighteenth Century,* (London & New York: John Lane, 1909), p.101

> mistress at home, but that he constantly attended her abroad. It is not the private indulgence, but the public insult, of which I complain. The name of Miss Parsons would hardly have been known, if the First Lord of the Treasury had not led her, in triumph, through the Opera House, even in the presence of the Queen. When we see a man act in this manner, we may admit the shameless depravity of his heart; but what are we to think of his understanding?[113]

Grafton's vices were therefore perceived to be affecting his judgement in matters of the state, and in this society had a stake. In politics Walpole found his 'mutability' to be 'glaring', and clearly attributed the Duke's poor political performance to his extra-curricular activities with Parsons, complaining that Grafton was 'like an apprentice, thinking the world should be postponed to a whore and a horserace'.[114] As the early twentieth-century writer Horace Bleackley notes, despite the outcry over their behaviour, the public had come to expect that Parsons might someday be made Duchess. Many people who had sought favour

[113] Junius, 'Letter XXIII. To the Printer of the Public Advertiser, 22 June 1769', *Letters,* I, pp.113-4

[114] Walpole, *Memoirs,* p.91; 'Walpole to Conway, 16 June 1768', *Correspondence*, XXXIX, pp.100-1

with the Prime Minister, he argues, would happily pay court to her. In short, 'it was allowed that she was queen of the ball'.[115]

Her 'reign' would not last. In March 1769 the relationship between Parsons and Grafton ended at about the same time as the Duke's divorce proceedings against his first wife were completed, leaving him free to remarry.[116] If he had intended to make Parsons his duchess, as public speculation suggested, her passionate affair with the young John Frederick Sackville, 3rd Duke of Dorset, put an end to the idea.
By 18 May Grafton had strategically proposed to the heiress Elizabeth Wrottesely, niece of the Duke of Bedford.[117] In a satirical print, *The Political Wedding*, published in the *Oxford Magazine* shortly after they parted, Parsons is represented 'as a victim of male disloyalty', a Dido-like figure abandoned by Aeneas for his political ambitions of founding Rome

[115] Bleackley, *Ladies Fair and Frail*, pp.108, 119

[116] 'Memoirs of Palinurus and Annabella', pp.113-4; Peter Durrant suggests their relationship ended on 23 March 1769, the same day Grafton's divorce was finalised, see Durrant, 'Grafton', *ODNB*

[117] John Russell, 4th Duke of Bedford, 'Private Journal of John, Fourth Duke of Bedford, 18 May 1796', *Debates of the House of Commons, during the Thirteenth Parliament of Great Britain, commonly called the Unreported Parliament*, ed. by J. Wright, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1841), I. p.619, fn.1

(Fig. 1.24).[118] The image shows Grafton and Wrottesely exchanging vows, with Parsons weeping on the side, a speech bubble quoting, 'I retire on a pension of 300 pr An.^{m} to make room for Miss Wr_y'.[119]

It is unclear who commissioned Reynolds for Parsons's portrait, or if it was indeed a commission, since Reynolds's Ledger shows no clear payment for the painting.[120] Reynolds's Pocket Book reveals Parsons had already sat for the artist on 31 January 1769, with another appointment on 3 February, the remainder of her sittings taking place later in the year.[121] The portrait was therefore started when the couple were still together. It is possible Grafton had intended it as a wedding gift if his intentions toward Parsons were as honourable as some speculators thought.[122] Either way, the opportunity for Reynolds to paint this infamous courtesan at a time of high drama must have appealed to both

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[118] 'The Political Wedding', *Oxford Magazine, Or, Universal Museum: Calculated for General Instruction and Amusement, on a Plan Entirely New* (July 1769), p.18; McCreery, *The Satirical Gaze*, p.94-6

[119] 'The Political Wedding', pl. pp.18/19

[120] The only payments are in 1767 and 1768 for a 'Miss Hortoun', thought to be a miss-spelling of Miss Houghton, not Horton. Reynolds's spelling is erratic, see Mannings, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, pp.264-5

[121] Ibid, p.264

[122] Ibid; The remaining five sittings noted in Reynolds's Pocket Book for 1769 are at the end of August and the beginning of September, suggesting a break, which most likely corresponds with the parting of Parsons and Grafton, see Mannings, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, pp.264-5

his commercial inclinations and his love of gossip. Reynolds and the courtesans who sat for him had a symbiotic relationship, which placed the artist at the 'heart of contemporary courtesan culture', providing subjects for some of his most compelling portraits while simultaneously boosting the celebrity status of the sitter.[123] As Postle argues, Londoners were simultaneously 'scandalised and fascinated' by exotic courtesans, as they had been by two of Reynolds's other sitters, Kitty Fisher and Nelly O'Brien, who had both achieved celebrity status, in no small part due to the publicity they attained from their portraits (Figs. 1.25 & 1.26).[124]

Parsons's presence within the picture frame cannot, therefore, be taken as arbitrary, and Reynolds's portrayal of her shows his ability to use the mutability of exotic dress to complicate her status. As a recognised figure, she was enmeshed in the discourses on consumption and immorality that preoccupied society in the eighteenth century. As a foreign, exotic luxury the shawl can be read as the visual manifestation of the vice bound up in her body. But it is also used here as a generic Oriental garment which forms part of the increasingly popular *à la turque*

[123] Postle, 'Painted Women', *Creation of Celebrity,* p.181
[124] Ibid

style, in which turbans adorned with pearls and aigrettes and *patka*-style waistbands were worn as accessories to fashionable dress. There is slippage between the ideal beauty of Parsons's face, her attire *á la mode* and the serpentine sensuality of a foreign garment that was believed to transfer promiscuity from India to Britain.[125] Her status is ambiguous and her image plays on the public's fascination and fear of the exotic outsider.

* * *

Between 7 February and 24 March 1782 another exotic and beautiful outsider, Jane Baldwin, sat for Reynolds wearing an elaborate *turquerie*-style costume, which included two Indian Cashmere shawls. Like Nancy Parson's portrait, *Mrs Baldwin* (1782) also projects ambiguity and mutability in how the costume is read, shifting between masquerade dress and an expression of an authentic lived experience (Fig. 1.3). The sitter—born in Smyrna in 1763 to Margaret Icard (of French descent) and William Maltass, a Yorkshire-born, English merchant for the Levant

[125] Jones, *Formation of Taste,* pp.117-52

Company—was the nineteen-year-old wife of George Baldwin, a wealthy London-born merchant who had been stationed in Alexandria, Egypt.[126] There is no financial transaction recorded in the artist's 'Ledger' regarding this portrait and it is therefore assumed that Reynolds painted the young woman for his own pleasure, to enhance his professional reputation, and to promote the status and renown of his subject.[127] The portrait was exhibited in the Academy's Great Room later that year along with a number of Reynolds's other female portraits, which Hallett argues formed 'part of a colourful, glamorous and theatrical parade of fancy dress' intentionally chosen to display the artist's skill, but also to entertain the viewer and elicit recognition for both artist and sitter.[128] Baldwin was only too aware of how advantageous her own image was for promoting herself and her husband to the powerful and privileged classes of Europe. The previous year they had visited Vienna, where she gained celebrity status for her beauty, which inspired both Emperor Joseph I

[126] Maltass was born in Ripon, Yorkshire. He and his brother Henry, were among the earliest Europeans to settle in Turkey in the early part of the eighteenth century; James Mew, 'Baldwin, George (1744–1826), diplomatist and writer', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 3 January 2008), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1165>

[127] Postle, 'The Modern Apelles', *Creation of Celebrity,* pp.27-9

[128] Hallett, 'catalogue', *Creation of Celebrity,* p.132

and his highly influential chancellor Wenzel von Kaunitz to commission artists to capture her likeness.[129]

Baldwin's reputation thus preceded her arrival in London the following year, causing quite a stir among the society of novelists and artists who orbited around Samuel Johnson, Hester Thrale and Fanny Burney.[130] Enthralled with her exotic romanticism and Oriental splendour, Thrale called her the 'Pretty Greek', although she had no East European lineage. Her success in enchanting the Prince of Wales is said to have secured her husband's subsequent position as British Consul-General in Egypt.[131] She became equally famed for her beauty and hot temper, and she was admired for 'the graceful novelty of her foreign dress and language', attracting the attention of no fewer than four artists wishing to paint her portrait during her time in England.[132]

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[129] Emperor Joseph I commissioned a bust from the sculptor Cerrachi, see John William Burgon, 'Obituary—Mrs. Baldwin', *Gentleman's Magazine*, 166 (July-December 1839), p.657

[130] Frances Burney, *The Diary and Letters of Madam D'Arblay, author of 'Evelina,' 'Cecilia,' &c.*, ed. by Charlotte Barrett, 7 vols (London: Henry Colburn, 1854), II, pp.98-9

[131] Postle, 'Catalogue', *Creation of Celebrity*, p.220

[132] Besides Reynolds, Baldwin sat for Richard Conway, Robert Edge Pine and John Smart the elder; Burgon, 'Obituary', p.657; *Thraliana; The Diary of Mrs. Hester Lynch Thrale, 1776–1809*, ed. by Katherine C. Balderston, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1951), I. pp.530-1

Dress and art historian Aileen Ribeiro argues that Mrs Baldwin's outfit is a 'fancy dress' costume, and indeed it is recorded that Baldwin wore it to a masquerade ball hosted by King George III.[133] After the theatre, the masked ball had become the most popular form of entertainment in eighteenth-century Britain. London masquerades, in particular, were hugely popular commercial events, staged at theatres or halls like the Haymarket Assembly Room or the Pantheon in Oxford Street, at entertainment rooms like Madame Cornelys's Carlisle House, and at pleasure gardens like Ranelagh and Vauxhall.[134] In the 1730s 'Count' Heidegger's 'Midnight Masquerades' attracted about eight hundred people a week, and by the 1750s this number had swelled to the thousands.[135] Masked and extravagantly costumed, the masquerade-goer inhabited a liminal space that allowed social and sexual interactions outside of accepted practices. Freedom of address, negation of social hierarchy and sexual experimentation all flowed as freely as the

[133] Ribeiro, *Dress worn at Masquerades*, p.232; George H. Story, 'Principal Accessions by Gift,' *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, 1:3 (February, 1906), p.48

[134] Masquerades attained a fever pitch of popularity in the 1730s and 1740s, due largely to the founding of Vauxhall (1732) and Ranelagh (1742) pleasure gardens.

[135] Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization: The Carnivalesque in Eighteenth-century English Culture and Fiction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), pp.1-51

bacchanalian consumption that characterised these balls. In this setting, the potential for 'general anti-decorum', which rendered the masquerade 'the exemplary site of mutability, incongruity, and mystery', led many contemporary commentators to condemn it as morally corrupting and socially damaging.[136] As early as 1711 the newly launched *Spectator* highlighted the subject with a 'letter' from the 'director of the society for the reformation of manners', who wrote to encourage the prevention of 'such a promiscuous multitude of both sexes from meeting together in so clandestine a manner' at the 'Midnight Mask'.[137] The rules at this 'libidinous assembly', the writer argues, are 'wonderfully contrived for the advancement of cuckoldom'. His greatest fear, however, was the inability to tell one class of person from another as standard dress codes were completely overturned. 'All the persons who compose this lawless assembly are masked', he complained, 'we dare not attack any of them in

[136] Terry Castle, 'The Carnivalization of Eighteenth-Century English Narrative, *PMLA,* 99:5 (October 1984), p.903; Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization*, p.52

[137] Joseph Addison, *Spectator,* 8, (9 March 1710–1), reprinted in Joseph Addison, *The Works of Joseph Addison: Complete in Three Volumes. Embracing the Whole of the 'Spectator',* 3 vols (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1845), I, p.28; for more on the Society for the Reformation of Manners, see Alan Hunt, *Governing Morals: A Social History of Moral Regulation* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp.28-56

our way, lest we should send a woman of quality to Bridewell or a peer of Great Britain to the Counter.'[138]

Literary historian Terry Castle argues for a more positive take on masquerade culture, writing that these events were emblematic of 'irrepressible "liberty" [and] a joyful rather than degrading' occasion, with their 'Protean sensual pleasures revelatory and life-enhancing rather than cynical or satiating'.[139] The masquerade ball was a place to experiment outside the boundaries of social norms and dress codes that limited individuality in favour of class distinction. This ability to experiment with identity also began to move beyond the liminal space of the masked ball and onto the canvases of eighteenth-century portraiture. In contrast to the seventeenth century, historian Anne Hollander has noted a 'conscious' turn from dress to dressing up in the eighteenth century, when 'the stage and fancy dress both seem to have become more interesting as pictorial subjects in themselves'.[140]

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[138] Bridewell Prison and Hospital was established in 1553 for the punishment of the disorderly poor and the housing of homeless children in the City of London

[139] Terry Castle, 'Eros and Liberty at the English Masquerade, 1710–90', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 17.2 (1983): p.156-76

[140] Anne Hollander, *Fabric of Vision: Dress and Drapery in Painting* (London & New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), p.86

Identity, constituted by dress that signalled status and gender, was replaced in many portraits by an assumed character in theatrical, mythological or masquerade costume. This was particularly prevalent in the 1740s, with a series of twenty-three portraits by George Knapton for the Society of Dilettanti in which masquerade costumes were used to individualise each member (Fig. 1.27). As they were all represented in the same setting by the same artist, their assumed characters came to constitute their individuality.[141] As the historian Bruce Redford argues, the portraits are all intensely performative and they 'blur the boundaries between public and private, past and present, decorum and license, veneration and subversion'.[142] Although these portraits are styled using the basic typologies of masquerade costumes, including 'van Dyck', 'Classical', 'Venetian', 'libertine' and 'Turkish' dress, they are nonetheless symbolically aligned with the personality of the sitter, which was not necessarily the case with the character assumed for a masquerade ball.[143]

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[141] Marcia Pointon, *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-Century England*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 82; for a study on the Dilettanti Society which includes a chapter on Knapton's portraits see Bruce Redford, *Dilettanti: the Antic and the Antique in Eighteenth-Century England* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2008), pp.13-43

[142] Redford, *Dilettanti*, pp.13-4

[143] Ibid, p.19

Dressing up in Oriental costume for masquerade balls and for portraiture was inspired by paintings of the European ambassadors, merchants and travellers who interacted with the Ottoman and Persian courts of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, often capturing their impressions of local dress in letters and diaries. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, for example, published an account of the daily lives of fashionable Turkish women in 1763, supplying her readers with minute details of Turkish dress. She also modelled Turkish outfits in numerous portraits, which could be copied for masquerade balls.[144] The *turquerie* costume was second in popularity only to historical costumes in the van Dyck tradition. The English diplomat Sir Robert Shirley, Persian ambassador to the Pope, who 'accounted himself never ready till he had something of the Persian habit about him', is credited with 'pioneering the vogue for Europeans in oriental dress' in the seventeenth century.[145] Anthony van Dyck's 1622 portrait of Shirley in his Persian robes of

[144] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was depicted in various forms of Eastern dress by a number of artists, including Jean-Étienne Liotard, *Lady Montagu in Turkish dress*, c.1756; Charles Jervas, *Mary Wortley Montagu*, c.1716, and Jean-Baptiste van Mour, *Mary Wortley Montagu with her son Edward*, 1717; see Ribeiro, *Art of Dress,* pp.222-8

[145] Christine Riding, 'Traveller and Sitters: The Orientalist Portrait', *The Lure of the East: British Orientalist Painting,* ed. by Nicholas Tromans (London: Tate, 2008), p.49

honour (Fig. 1.28), and the artist's subsequent portrait of the first British aristocrat to tour Persia and India, William Fielding, 1st Earl of Denbigh, painted just over a decade later wearing an Indian *jama*-style costume (Fig. 1.29), no doubt inspired the likes of Robert Clive to don 'the dress of a Nabob very richly ornamented with diamonds' at a masquerade ball for the King of Denmark in 1768, and Captain John Foote to assume the pose of an Indian nobleman in his Mughal costume for Reynolds in 1761.[146]

In *Mrs Baldwin*, the pose assumed by the sitter is arguably also taken from Mughal imagery. Baldwin sits with her legs crossed underneath her on a red divan, her body facing forward but her head in three-quarter profile. She looks dispassionately at an ancient coin from her birthplace, Smyrna; she was in fact holding a book, which Reynolds suggested she read to prevent her renowned restlessness from disrupting the sitting.[147] Martin Postle argues that the pose 'evokes the sensuous realm of the bagnio', which renders it particularly *risqué*.[148] As Aileen Ribeiro notes, etiquette and deportment at that time in the West, would

[146] 'Foreign and Domestic Intelligence', *Oxford Magazine* (October 1768), p.160
[147] Ibid, pp.656-8
[148] Postle, 'Catalogue', *Creation of Celebrity*, p.220

not allow a sitter 'to lounge like an odalisque on her sofa'.[149] In doing so Baldwin would be seen to be breaching the social norms of decency. Anthony van Dyck used the same pose in his 1622 pendant portrait of Teresia Khan, Lady Shirley, the Persian wife of Sir Robert Shirley (Fig. 1.30). This painting may have served as a Western artistic precedent for Reynolds with its opulently styled costume, rich colours, billowing red curtain and seated figure.[150] Rather than an odalisque in a bagnio, however, Lady Shirley was a Circassian princess married to a distinguished English diplomat.

An alternative argument is that Jane Baldwin's pose invokes the romantic view of the seated Mughal emperor or prince holding court, so often portrayed in Mughal miniatures, such as the famous seventeenth-century portrait attributed to Govardhan, *Shah Jahan on the Peacock Throne* (*c*.1635) (Fig. 1.31) or the eighteenth-century painting *Emperor Farrukhsiyar Bestows a Jewel on a Nobleman* (c.1713–14), attributed to the Indian court painter Kalyán Dás, known as Chitarman II (Fig 1.32). It is

[149] Aileen Ribeiro, *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe 1715–1789* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2002), p.270

[150] Postle, 'Catalogue', *Creation of Celebrity*, p.220

highly probable that Reynolds was influenced by a seventeenth-century album of Mughal miniatures he bought in July 1777, which included works by the famed Chitarman.[151]

As art historian Natasha Eaton argues, the consumption of Mughal miniatures and other 'oriental' artworks by international ambassadors, aristocrats or ladies and gentlemen of fashion became part of a desire for highly prized rarities, which were displayed as objects of taste above the fireplaces of the elite in 'their most public domestic spaces—dining rooms or parlors'.[152] Collectors of Oriental art, Eaton writes, 'wanted to savour the trappings of Ottoman, Persian, Chinese and Mughal courts (assisted by travel accounts by Jesuit missionaries and Protestant merchants obsessed with luxuries and idolatry)'.[153] From the late seventeenth century the British elite were enthralled by 'a certain style of Mughal image economy'; the 2nd Earl of Shaftesbury, for example, was drawn by the sensuality of Indian art, the connoisseur Horace Walpole by the

[151] *A Volume containing forty-four portraits, chiefly of Princes and Officers of the court of Akbar, Jahangír, and Sháhjahán* (c.1661–2), British Library: Folio: Add MS 18801

[152] Natasha Eaton, 'Nostalgia for the Exotic: Creating an Imperial Art in London, 1750–1793', *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* 39:2 (2006), pp.230, 235

[153] Ibid, p.230

'materiality, style and intricacy of Mughal painting'.[154] Reynolds's composition and positioning of the subject in his portrait of Baldwin can therefore be seen as an attempt to tap into the authenticity of Baldwin's lived experience in the East. This is emphasised by the Smyrnian coin held in her hand, which not only invokes the gesture of giving seen in Chitarman's painting of the Emperor Farrukhsiyar bestowing a jewel on a nobleman, but also signals the significance of the trade in Eastern goods to Britain in the eighteenth century, which her husband played such a vital role in establishing.

Baldwin's emerald green, silk kaftan, brocaded in vertical gold bands with small floral motifs, is an authentic Turkish garment. The French illustrator Octavien Dalvimart, who travelled through Ottoman Turkey and Greece for four years from 1796, produced a series of drawings 'from nature' of traditional Turkish costume, which indicate that Mrs Baldwin's costume is typical of a sultana from the Imperial harem, complete with sleeveless, ermine-trimmed cape, tall headdress

[154] Ibid, p.232

and *buta*-patterned Cashmere shawl around the waist (Fig. 1.33).[155] Baldwin almost certainly acquired her outfit in her hometown of Smyrna.

The incorporation of the Indian Cashmere shawl into Ottoman dress has a significantly longer history than the shawl's assimilation into Western dress. Kashmiri merchants had been trading across Western Asia for centuries, and there are accounts of *'sal-i kesmiri'* in Ottoman sources as early as the seventeenth century.[156] Most accounts, however, date from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, showing that trade routes by land from Surat to Bokhara, Meshed, Isfahan, Baghdad, Aleppo and Istanbul, and by sea from Surat to Bandar-Abbas, Basra and Jeddah, brought Cashmere shawls among other Indian textiles to markets all over the Ottoman Empire.[157]

At the age of sixteen when Jane Maltass married George Baldwin, she found herself at the centre of British efforts to streamline trade links between India and Britain through the Red Sea. Her husband was

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[155] Octavien Dalvimart, *Costume of Turkey, Illustrated by a Series of Engravings; with Description in English and French* (London: William Miller, 1802); see *Monthly Review; or Literary Journal,* 39 (November 1802), p.276-80 for a review, which describes the drawings as 'executed with particular elegance and brilliancy', p.280

[156] Rizvi, *Pashmina,* p.207

[157] Ibid*,* pp.207-17

responsible for opening up the sea trade between Jeddah and London for the English East India Company, which positioned him at a pivotal point in the flow of the Cashmere shawl trade through Egypt in the 1770s. From the 1760s, when he first travelled to Cyprus, Baldwin saw the trade potential of opening up a route from India to Egypt through the Red Sea.[158] The route was ostensibly 'blocked to non-Muslims to protect the holy cities and trade through Jiddah'; however, Baldwin recognised that the beys who controlled the route were always open to profitable opportunities.[159] In his *Recollections,* he recalls that in 1773 Mehemed Bey—Abu al-Dhahab, the Mamluk emir and regent of Ottoman Egypt (*r*.1770–75)—had encouraged his Red Sea scheme, saying, 'if you bring the India ships to Suez, I will lay an aqueduct from the Nile to Suez, and you shall drink of the Nile water'.[160] The East India Company, who were also working on access to the Red Sea route, beat Baldwin to the chase; however, by 1775, as the only Arab-speaking English merchant in Egypt, he was ideally placed to offer his services to the Company, whose ships

[158] Mew, 'Baldwin, George', *ODNB*

[159] Ibid

[160] George Baldwin, *Political Recollections Relative to Egypt,* 2nd edn (London: W. Bulmer, 1802), p.4; Muhammad Bey Abū aḍ-Ḍahab (1735–75) was a Mamluk emir and regent of Ottoman Egypt.

were coming up the Red Sea for trans-shipments at Suez. As his biographer James Mews writes, Baldwin successfully 'set up commerce with England, and began linking this trade to Suez and India, organizing schedules and quick turnarounds'.[161]

It was no doubt through this extensive trade with India that Mrs Baldwin's Indian Cashmere shawls came to appear in Reynolds's painting. The most distinct is the white Cashmere shawl draped over the back of the red divan. It has multiple, alternating rows of floral sprigs filling the *pallas*, each sprig with a single *camellia japonica* head in bright vermilion, four lateral buds and green leaves. The pattern is identical to a shawl that dates from around the mid-eighteenth century, housed in the TAPI Collection of Indian textiles in Surat, India (Fig. 1.34).[162] Another shawl, worn in the style of a *patka* around Baldwin's waist, is saffron-coloured, with medium-sized *pallas* filled with small floral bouquets in

[161] The success of his business was abruptly halted in 1779 by the sultan, who 'issued a prohibitory firman' against European merchants resulting in violence and a daring escape by Baldwin to Smyrna where his agent, William Maltass, resided with his beautiful sixteen-year-old daughter Jane, see Mew, 'Baldwin, George', *ODNB*

[162] The TAPI Collection of Indian textiles, based in Surat, India, was formed by collectors Shilpa and Praful Shah and is one of the most comprehensive collections of historic Indian textiles in the world. TAPI is an acronym that stands for 'Textiles & Art of the People of India'

red and pink. It is similar to a shawl fragment, also in the TAPI Collection, which is contemporaneous with the portrait (Fig. 1.35).

The authenticity of the shawls and the kaftan, along with indications that the Indian garment had already become assimilated into Turkish dress, suggests that Baldwin's outfit was more than a masquerade costume. The difference between the masquerade costume and the authentic association with cultural dress is the antithetical nature of the masquerade, in which the character impersonated should essentially bear the opposite characteristics to oneself.[163] In the case of authentic cultural association, the character portrayed has a direct bearing on the personality or history of the person represented. In the case of Jane Baldwin, her costume is the authentic dress of native women in Smyrna where she was born and raised. Her associations with the costume are informed through personal experience, not borrowed second-hand from the travelogues or portraits of others.

There is a strong suggestion that Baldwin wore her *turquerie* outfit regularly while in London, as implied in the correspondence between the

[163] Redford, *Dilettanti*, p.19

novelist Fanny Burney and the playwright Samuel Crisp. Having met Mrs Baldwin in the circle of the diarist and patron of the arts Hester Thrale, Burney describes 'the fair Greek' with such enthusiasm to Crisp that he immediately responds:

> I most sincerely recommend to you […] to put her down (while she is strong and warm in your memory and imagination) in a finished drawing in black and white. I don't mean this merely to satisfy curiosity, but as a wonderful academy figure, which may be of powerful use to you hereafter, to design from, in some future historical composition. Such opportunities don't offer every day; perfect novelty, united to such uncommon excellence, is a prize indeed; don't let her slip, but like Lothario, 'seize the golden, glorious opportunity'.[164]

Whether Burney took Crisp's advice is not know; however, the opportunity was, of course, seized by Reynolds the following year.

* * *

Ambiguity was the most notable interpretive characteristic of the Indian Cashmere shawl when it arrived in Britain in the mid-eighteenth century. During this period, as this chapter has revealed, the shawl was

[164] 'Letter from Samuel Crisp to Fanny Burney, 25 Feb 1782' in Burney, *Diary and Letters of Madam D'Arblay*, II, pp.98-9

incorporated into sartorial presentations of the self, which relied on the mutability of exotic luxury objects to define status. The shawl thus gave meaning to certain aspects of visual culture within the broader visual language used for self-fashioning and masquerading. Its semiotic mutability is evident when viewed across the three earliest paintings to incorporate the garment into their sartorial schemes.

In *Captain John Foote* (Fig. 1.1) the shawl is part of an authentic Mughal costume, which is used by an English *nabob* to emphasise his association with the exotic East and, more importantly, to suggest the status and wealth he attained through his imperial connections. Ambiguity, however, resides not in the authenticity of the costume, which is genuine, but in the integrity of Foote's self-fashioning. In the prevailing climate of public distrust toward the *nabobs* and *nabobinas* who returned to Britain with obscene wealth suspiciously gained, Foote's image becomes both intriguing for its exotic splendour, and repellent for its potentially ill-gotten ostentation and social presumption.

Nancy Parsons's Indian Cashmere shawl in *Mrs Horton, later Viscountess Maynard* (Fig. 1.2) has no direct connection to India, but is used in a more generalised sartorial scheme *à la turque*, one of the most

popular forms of masquerade costume made popular by returning travellers to Ottoman Turkey and *nabobinas* from India. Parsons's intention was no doubt to present herself as a fashionable, sophisticated, worldly and genteel woman, yet the serpentine styling of the shawl, which covers her head to form a turban before winding around her neck and torso, serves to highlight the negative associations prevalent in eighteenth-century luxury debates between promiscuity and luxury foreign textiles. Given her real status as a courtesan embroiled in a high-profile scandal, Reynolds appears to have deliberately used the mutability of the garment to produce ambiguity in the subject's status, thus creating slippage between sophisticated exoticism and socially corrupting vice.

The theme of ambiguity continues in the last painting, *Mrs Baldwin* (Fig. 1.3), where the image slips between a masquerade of the exotic and an expression of authentic cultural association. Most readings err on the side of masquerade; however, the circumstances of Jane Baldwin's life growing up in Smyrna, her marriage to the first Englishman to facilitate East Indies trade through the Red Sea to Britain, and the authenticity of the Indian Cashmere shawl's incorporation into Turkish dress, suggest

the portrait reveals more about Jane Baldwin than it hides behind the white face paint, turban and kaftan.

The three paintings by Reynolds, when placed side by side, bring to the fore the essence of the Indian Cashmere shawl's place in British society and visual culture in the mid-eighteenth century. The ambiguity and the mutability of the shawl's meaning made it an ideal accessory for outsiders to perform conscious self-fashioning, or deliberate disguise, or to emphasise authentic cultural associations. In many ways these paintings also break down some of the insincerity and rigidity of performing to the codes of politeness and dress, at a time when sentiment and sensibility were transforming the way art and taste were critiqued. As historian John Brewer argues:

> Though sentiment and feeling had always been important in the polite idea of taste, from the mid-century they began to have a new prominence in the arts and criticism. The refined person was portrayed not so much as someone who was discerning but as someone who had an overwhelming, spontaneous emotional response to art, an idea that was to culminate in the Romantic view of art.[165]

[165] Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination,* pp.100-1

In the following chapter, the transition to a 'Romantic view' of art, and in what constituted taste, will be traces through the Indian Cashmere shawl's transformation from an exotic object of mutability to a fashionable symbol of British taste and femininity. This progression from fancy dress to high fashion had already begun in the 1770s, with both written and visual sources revealing that the Indian Cashmere shawl was not only 'so well known in England' by the end of that decade, but had made its entrée into fashionable upper-class circles by the middle of the next.[166] This change was neither systematic nor sudden, but rather, to evoke the theorist Raymond Williams, it was gradual and complex with residual and emergent forms of cultural and social meanings coexisting.[167] The residual fashion for dressing up *à la turque*, for example, whether for a masked ball or for self-fashioning, was still

[166] For written accounts which demonstrate that the Indian Cashmere shawl was being incorporated into British fashion by 1777, see John Stewart, 'An Account of the Kingdom of Thibet, in a Letter from John Stewart, Esquire, F. R. S. to Sir John Pringle, Bart P. R. S, London March 20, 1777', *Philosophical Transactions* (Royal Society), 67 (1 January 1778), p.485; 'Silk Dyer and Scowerer', *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser* (21 December 1784), p.1; 'Public Office, Bow Street, Oct 30', *Public Advertiser* (31 October 1785), p.4; For visual examples, see David Allan's *James Erskine, Lord Alva and his family* (1780) in which an Indian Cashmere shawl is worn by the matriarch, Lady Alva, to accompany an established yet waning style of polonaise gown in layered green silk. In the second painting by Allan, *The Family of John Francis, 7th Earl of Mar* (1780) the shawl is worn by the Earl's twelve-year-old daughter over a simple neoclassical dress, anticipating the style of the Regency period

[167] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp.121-7

evident, for both men and women, well into the nineteenth century. A report in the *London Courier* in November 1801 describes the arrival in London of the celebrated naval officer Sir Sydney Smith, 'attired in the Turkish dress; turban, robe, shawl, and girdle round his waist'.[168] And in 1803, according to the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal,* a Mrs Sheridan wore 'a Turkish turban of an Indian shawl' to the Queen's birthday celebrations.[169] Coterminously, many classified advertisements and magazine reports attest to the shawl's increasing appeal as a fashion garment. During the last decade of the eighteenth century the demand for Indian Cashmere shawls increased dramatically, yet records show sporadic wholesale purchasing of Indian shawls in pathetically small numbers from customs houses outside of London.[170] Auction houses faired better, with 2,380 'Rich India Pattern Shawls' among 'Chints' and

[168] 'The Courier', *London Courier and Evening Gazette* (11 November 1801), p.2

[169] 'The Queen's Birth Day', *Salisbury and Winchester Journal* (24 January 1803), p.2

[170] In the eighteenth century wholesale and retail were yet to be clearly delineated, with many linen drapers providing both services from the same warehouse, see Mark Girouard, *The English Town: A History of Urban Life*, (New Haven & London, Yale University Press, 1990), p.237; For Customs House sales, see: 'Custom-house, Rochester', *World and Fashionable Advertiser* (24 March 1787), p.4; 'For Sale', *General Evening Post*, (13-15 May 1790), p.2; 'Rochester', *Morning Post and Fashionable World* (26 January 1795), p.4; 'Deale. For Sale', *Daily Advertiser* (25 June 1796), p.2

'Waistcoat Shapes' listed at one lot in 1791.[171] From 1798 linen drapers like Foster and Brown, Deacon and Johnston, and Beamon and Abbott tried to fill the demand by appealing for second-hand shawls from the nobility who receive them as presents from India.[172] In February 1800 Foster and Brown even placed an advertisement produced exclusively for the purpose of buying second-hand Indian Cashmere shawls:

> FROM the very great demand which FOSTER and BROWN have had, and still experience for India Shawls, they are determined to render their assortment as extensive and various as possible; and as this is only to be effected by collecting them of those Ladies for whom they are bought as presents, F. and B. take leave respectfully to inform the Nobility and their numerous Friends, that for real Shawls, of whatever pattern, they will exchange others, or the utmost value given in money or goods of more general use, of which, at present, they have such a variety of superior quality as they are convinced cannot fail to be found deserving of general and particular attention.[173]

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[171] 'The Account of the Manufacturers, Wheelhouse and Whitfield', *London Gazette* (29 January–1 February 1791), p.66

[172] 'Bond Street', *Morning Herald* (1 December 1800), p.1; 'To Ladies in General', *Morning Post and Gazetteer* (23 May 1800), p.1; 'From Bengal and Madras', *True Briton* (3 January 1800), p.1; It was also at this time that Davison, Beamon and Abbott in Bond Street began advertising both India and Norwich shawls. 'Davison, Beamon and Abbott', *Morning Chronicle* (5 December 1792), p.1; 'French Cambrics', *Morning Chronicle* (16 October 1795), p.1; A market opened for second-hand shawls, see 'An India Shawl', *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, (21 December 1781), p.4; 'Indian Shawl', *World and Fashionable Advertiser* (4 May 1787), p.4; 'Shawl', *Oracle and Public Advertiser* (8 March 1796), p.1

[173] 'FROM the very great demand', *Morning Chronicle* (15 February 1800), p.1

Besides the great demand for Indian Cashmere shawls, the Foster and Brown notice also makes clear that there had been a shift in the conduit for shawls from India to Britain. It was not to the *nabobs* or *nabobinas* that the linen drapers turned for their supply of shawls but to the nobility. This shift corresponds with the transformation in both use and meaning of the shawl from Captain John Foote's appropriation of the Indian garment in 1861, to its inclusion in reports on the 'most Elegant and Select Fashions for the Season' described as 'never more tasteful and becoming than at the present age'. [174]

The following chapter will examine how the Indian Cashmere came to embody British taste during the Regency period. By drawing comparisons between artistic representations of Emma Hamilton's expressive Attitudes, performed in the 1790s, and early nineteenth-century paintings of women by George Dawe, the shawl's assimilation into the British cultural milieu will be traced and shown to converge with the formation of both Regency taste and the notion of feminine respectability.

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[174] 'General Observations on the most Elegant and Select Fashions for the Season', *Bell's Weekly Messenger* (3 January 1808), p.5

CHAPTER 2

From Attitudes to à la mode

On 15 November 1783 the auctioneer George Squibb advertised a house for sale near Cavendish Square, along with the following contents:

> THE Superlatively elegant Houshold [*sic*] Furniture, capital Pier Glasses, Plate, Jewels, China, and Pictures, a valuable Iron Chest, some beautiful Indian Shawls, fine Muslins, Point Laces, Musical Instruments, Wines, with numerous other valuable Effects, of PERSONS of FASHION.[1]

The notice, posted in the *Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser*, clearly defines the Indian Cashmere shawl as an object of high fashion rather than a mutable object of curiosity, but it also anticipates the shawl's integration into the total aesthetic project that gave the Regency period

[1] 'Sales by Auction', *Morning Herald*, p.4

its distinct visual character. The shawls are appreciated here for their beauty, rather than their exoticism, and Squibb lists them alongside furniture of unsurpassed elegance and value, which had belonged to 'PERSONS of FASHION'. This was code for modern urban elites who were in vogue and culturally astute. The advertisement is thus selling more than a house and its furniture; it is selling a whole lifestyle defined by its beauty, quality, elegance and value.

Over the last two decades of the eighteenth century the Indian Cashmere shawl was reconceptualised as a garment described by one French magazine as the '*toilette à l'anglaise*'.[2] By the early nineteenth century it had been wholly assimilated into the defining aesthetic of the period, understood as the sophisticated and fashionable *châle de choix* for Englishwomen of taste and respectability. Yet how could a garment, initially associated with the self-fashioning of the *arriviste,* the deception of the masquerade and the erotic vice of the harem, be reimagined as an object of sophisticated British taste? The answer, as this chapter will

[2] *Journal de la mode et du gout* (5 June 1790), quoted in Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress,* p.115; While 'toilette' is used here to mean a style of dress, the term was also associated with the ritual of dressing and pampering in the dressing room, an activity amongst the wealthy which included entertaining friends, taking breakfast, and even discussing world affairs. It was a space to display luxury goods and assert rank

demonstrate, lies in the convergence of a number of factors over the decades flanking the turn of the century, which together came to define respectable femininity within a particular aesthetic construct in the Regency period. These factors encompassed philosophical desires to formulate a standard of taste; the role of that standard in defining the emerging notion of respectability; and the construct of a visual pedigree shaped by the interweaving of an artistic revival in classical antiquities with the birth of British Indology.[3] The convergence of these factors, this chapter argues, had a transformative effect on how the Indian Cashmere shawl was perceived and represented in visual culture.

As a process of cultural assimilation, the reimagining of the Indian Cashmere shawl will be explored by tracing the aesthetic lineage, or pedigree, from artistic representations of Emma Hamilton, wife of the antiquarian Sir William Hamilton, famous for her classically inspired Attitudes performed in the 1790s, to the early nineteenth-century portrait by George Dawe of the 'glittering society hostess' Louisa Hope, wife of art

[3] As defined in the Introduction, the birth of British Indology was focused on the study of ancient Indian history, literature, philosophy, and culture, and particularly ancient Indian language

collector and connoisseur Thomas Hope.[4] Both Lady Hamilton and the Hon. Mrs Hope were married to men who were instrumental in shaping the Regency aesthetic, a factor that directly influenced how they were visually represented, particularly as both women were actively involved in their husbands' pursuits.[5] The weaving together of the Greek revival and British Indology created the ideal social, artistic and philosophical conditions for the Indian shawl's assimilation into an aesthetic sartorial style that signalled British taste. This sartorial style is shown, however, to be more than a fashion; it was an integrated modern aesthetic with a complex pedigree that stretched all the way back to the ancient world.

Aesthetic is used here to describe a sensorial and intellectual scheme which encompassed art, dress, furniture, architecture and interior

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[4] Emma Hamilton, also known as Emma Hart during her adolescence, born Emy Lyon at Ness in Cheshire to Henry Lyon, an illiterate Blacksmith, and Mary Lyon, see Tom Pocock, 'Hamilton [née Lyon], Emma, Lady Hamilton, (*bap*.1765, *d*.1815)', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 4 October 2007), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/12063>; Louisa Hope (*d*.1851), daughter of William de la Poer Beresford, archbishop of Tuam and later first Baron Decried, niece of the 1st Marquess of Waterford, John Orbell, 'Hope, Thomas (1769–1831)', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 3 January 2008), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/13737>

[5] For the most comprehensive account of Hamilton's collections and activities, see Ian Jenkins & Kim Sloan, *Vases & Volcanoes: Sir William Hamilton and His Collection* (London: British Museum, 1996); The authority on Thomas Hope is David Watkins, *Thomas Hope 1769–1831 and the Neo-Classical Idea* (London: John Murray, 1968); *Thomas Hope: Regency Designer*, exh. cat. Bard Graduate Centre for Studies in the Decorative Arts, Design, and Culture, 17 July–16 November, 2008 and V&A, London, 21 March–22 June, 2008, ed. by David Watkins and Philip Hewat-Jaboor (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2008)

design. From Alexander Baumgarten, the German philosopher who coined the term 'aesthetics' in 1750, through to the philosophies of Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant, the notion of taste in the eighteenth century became defined by the sensory appreciation of aesthetics—what Kant called 'judgements of taste'—in which aesthetic pleasure is derived from the free-flowing interaction between the imagination and intellectual understanding while perceiving a particular object.[6] The shawl's earlier associations with vice and immorality as an exotic foreign object were replaced by the sensory appreciation of its aesthetic qualities: the elegance of its folds, the fineness of its weave, soft and light to the touch, yet exquisitely warm. But these aesthetic qualities were also integrated into the intellectual ideas that shaped Regency taste.

[6] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement,* trans. by James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988). Baumgarten and Burke represent the Continental rationalists and the British empiricists respectively, who differed on the point of cognition in the process of aesthetic appreciation. Baumgarten (following Leibnitz) believed sensory responses to beauty were received by way of cognition, while Burke (along with Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Hume), rejected cognitive responses to beauty. For a summary see Douglas Burnham, 'Immanuel Kant: Aesthetics', *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: A Peer-Reviewed Academic Resource*, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/kantaest/> accessed 23 August 2018

The concept of aesthetic taste has deep roots in Western cultural history.[7] From *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times,* by Anthony Ashley-Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury, written in 1711, to Archibald Alison's *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste* in 1790, the question of what constituted taste—where it arose from, how it could be recognised and, most importantly, how it could be expressed—became a defining aesthetic and philosophical characteristic of the eighteenth century, resulting in the attribution 'the century of taste'.[8] Within these debates, there was a growing desire over that period to develop a standard for good taste to counteract the association between immorality

[7] For the history of taste see Colin Campbell, *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), pp.138-72; Bernard Denvir, *The Eighteenth Century: Art, Design, and Society, 1689–1789* (London: Longman, 1983), pp.10-1, 63-116

[8] George Dickie, *The Century of Taste: The Philosophical Odyssey of Taste in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford University Press, 1996); The most important philosophical treaties on taste during the century: Anthony Ashley-Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711); Jonathan Richardson, *Two discourses* (1719); Francis Hutcheson (1694–1746), *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725); Thomas Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (1785); Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, *The Spectator,* nos. 411-21 (1712); Archibald Alison, *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste* (1811). For a concise summary of the three main lineages of philosophical debate on taste see James Shelley, '18th Century British Aesthetics', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,* ed. by Edward N. Zalta (Autumn 2014) <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/aesthetics-18th-british/> accessed 1 July 2016

and luxury discussed in Chapter 1.[9] As historian John Brewer argues, British writers, such as Joseph Addison, Edmund Burke and David Hume, wanted to separate the 'emotion of taste' from less noble feelings such as 'sexual desire and acquisitiveness' and to distinguish 'those things that were tasteful from the ordinary and useful objects of everyday life'.[10] The emphasis on morality was fundamental to the concept of taste, which developed gradually over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but began to have a greater impact on how luxury objects of aesthetic beauty—what Woodruff Smith calls 'legitimate' luxuries—were viewed by the last quarter of the century.[11] How the mind perceived the 'sensuous materiality' of the object was understood as a discrete experience quite different to the perceptions of utilitarian objects.[12] For Kant beauty and the arts were elevated to the level of truth and

[9] Smith, *Consumption and Respectability*, pp.81-83; for studies on the larger historical processes which saw perceptions on taste change throughout the period, see Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination*; Berg and Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century*

[10] Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination,* p.1

[11] Maurice James Quinlan, *Victorian Prelude: A History of English Manners, 1700–1830* (London: Frank Cass, 1965); Smith, *Consumption and Respectability*, p.82

[12] William Pietz, 'Fetish', *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. by Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff, 2nd edn (London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp.306-7; see also Koerner and Rausing, 'Value', p.422-3; Raymond Williams, *Keywords: a vocabulary of culture and society* (London: Fontana Press, 1988), pp.31-23

goodness.[13] Where moralists such as John Dennis had warned of the vice that clung to exotic foreign objects, Enlightenment thinkers offered a new way of seeing and feeling, about art and objects of aesthetic value, which contained and even domesticated foreign objects.[14] Theoretically, therefore, if the shawl could be experienced as an object of taste worn within the context of a genteel and fashionable lifestyle that was aesthetically pleasurable and intellectually stimulating, then its inherent exoticism could be contained, or at the very least limited to the picturesque, the sublime and the beautiful rather than the erotic and the fetishistic.

The rise of humanist notions of taste implied the possibility of change in how society regarded both luxury and gentility.[15] Before the eighteenth century, a 'gentleman' or 'gentlewoman' was understood to be someone born into a lineage that passed aristocratic pedigree from

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[13] Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, pp.1-2

[14] Dennis, *An Essay upon Publick Spirit*

[15] Smith, *Consumption and Respectability,* p.82; G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Brian Cowan, 'Reasonable Ecstasies: Shaftesbury and the Languages of Libertinism,' *Journal of British Studies,* 37:2 (1998), pp.111–38; Jones, *Gender and the Formation of Taste*, p.39; For an analysis of virtuosity as a 'study in sensibility', see Walter E. Houghton, 'The English Virtuoso in the Seventeenth Century: Part I', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 3:1 (January, 1942), p.57

generation to generation.[16] As Smith argues, 'only through the maintenance of a genteel or noble bloodline could the essence of the family be preserved'.[17] However, over the course of the eighteenth century the terms governing gentility were slowly redefined, and respectability became acquirable in the form of demonstrable civility, virtue and the display of good taste in dress and furnishings.[18] The definition of gentility, as historian Amanda Vickery demonstrates, is not to be found in class hierarchy but in the common terms of behaviour displayed by those who describe themselves as genteel.[19]

Throughout most of the eighteenth century, taste was generally perceived as something only attainable through good breeding and appropriate education, both of which ensured access to genteel society

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[16] Smith, *Consumption and Respectability,* p. 204

[17] Ibid, pp.32-3

[18] Ibid, pp.25-62; for Norbert Elias's reading of society's changing relationship with bodily functions as a civilising process, Elias Norbert, *The Court Society,* trans. by E. Jephcott (New York: Pantheon, 1983), pp.117-213; For challenge to Elias's thesis as too limiting, see Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998). Bryson demonstrates how conduct literature reveals meaningful codes of practice showing a shift from behaviour formed by court practices to a more urbane set of practices that show sociability and citizenship

[19] For a discussion on the ambiguities in definitions of gentility, see Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), pp.13-37

and the 'corridors of power'.[20] As Smith argues, however, 'if taste represented a refinement of sensibility, and sensibility was something for which essentially everyone had the capacity, then it was theoretically possible for anyone, regardless of social standing, to display taste'.[21] Taste could be acquired through effort and experience, as well as the acquisition of tasteful luxuries. Theoretically, this allowed the creation of a new gentility that was not based on bloodlines but on behaving in a manner that from the last three decades of the eighteenth century was described as respectability.[22] Taste therefore intersects with changing notions of gentility and luxury to drive the desire for certain goods imbued with particular cultural and social significance.[23]

These humanist notions of taste, with their roots in the early eighteenth-century morality theories of Shaftesbury and the artist Jonathan Richardson, were not the only factor to impact on how taste was formulated.[24] Richardson argues that taste is nurtured through the

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[20] Smith, *Consumption and Respectability,* p.81; Denvir, *The Eighteenth Century,* pp.10-1
[21] Smith, *Consumption and Respectability,* p.82
[22] Ibid*,* pp.82-3, 189-91; Vickery, *Gentleman's Daughter*, p.13
[23] Smith, *Consumption and Respectability,* pp.81-3
[24] Shaftesbury*, Characteristicks*, I, p.338

enlightened gaze of the connoisseur.[25] Connoisseurship, he argues, produced 'nobler Ideas', patriotism, 'moral Virtue, more Faith, more Piety and Devotion'—in short, 'a Better Man'.[26] Most significantly, as we will see in this chapter, the enlightened taste of the connoisseur, while found 'in every branch of the polite Arts', resided primarily with an appreciation of the 'Genius of the Ancients'.[27] For philosophers such as Francis Hutcheson and David Hume, the teachings and aesthetics of classical antiquity were a 'dominant trend' when they developed their ideas on taste.[28]

From the early 1780s there was a new type of connoisseur who would have a significant impact on how India and Indian objects, like the Cashmere shawl, were perceived. Orientalists, such as Warren Hastings

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[25] Richardson, *Two discourses*, pp.48-79; Ann Bermingham, 'The Aesthetics of Ignorance: The Accomplished Woman in the Culture of Connoisseurship', *Oxford Art Journal,* 16:1 (1993), p.14

[26] Richardson, *Essay on the Theory of Painting*, p.13

[27] Pierre-François Hugues d'Hancarville, *Collection of Etruscan, Greek and Roman Antiquities from the Cabinet of the Hon. W. Hamilton, His Britannick Maiesty's Envoy Extraordinary at the Court of Naples*, 4 vols (Naples: 1766–8), I, p.xvi

[28] Francis Hutcheson enthusiastically and critically incorporated ancient literature and history into his lectures, Hutcheson, Francis, *Hutcheson: Two Texts on Human Nature*, ed. by Thomas Mauter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp.86, 245; David Hume engaged in what he called 'the celebrated controversy concerning ancient and modern learning', writing in 1742, 'ancient eloquence, that is, the sublime and passionate, is of a much juster taste than the modern, or the argumentative and rational; and, if properly executed, will always have more command and authority over mankind, Hume, *Essays and Treatise*, I, pp.111-2

and William Jones, sought to resurrect the culture of India's ancient civilisation and incorporate it into Britain's classical Greco-Roman culture by demonstrating their shared roots in language and the sophistication of classical Indian culture. Of course, theirs was more than an intellectual pursuit; they had a direct socio-political agenda too. As historian Elizabeth Collingham argues:

> The British likened their return of India to an ideal classical past to the actions of the Ancient Romans in Greece. Thus the acquisition of Indian territory by the British was legitimised by administration in an 'Indian idiom', which at the same time recalled the splendid classical past of Europe.[29]

By culturally incorporating India into Britain, Indian luxury objects, particularly those, like the Cashmere shawl, that had both cultural and economic value in India, could be recast as culturally significant in Britain, making them desirable as objects of value and taste that gave visual form to the display of respectability.

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[29] Elizabeth M. Collingham, *Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj, c.1800–1947* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), p.15

Twenty-one years separate Angelica Kauffman's 1791 portrait *Lady Hamilton as the Comic Muse Thalia* (Fig. 2.1) and George Dawe's 1812 portrait *Louisa Hope* (Fig. 2.2). However, like familial generations, their conceptions interweave the shared characteristics that define what is described in this chapter as a *pedigree of taste*. Their most distinct commonality is that both portraits draw heavily on classical Grecian tropes: the women both pose with one arm raised in the attitude of the goddess Aphrodite. More commonly known as the pose of the *Venus Genetrix* after Roman copies—such as the *Aphrodite of Fréjus* (*c*.80–120 AD) (Fig. 2.3)—of the original bronze statue by the Athenian sculptor Callimachus in the fifth century BC.[30] Like the Romans, Kauffman and Dawe emphasise their subjects' classical ancestry by utilising the goddess's *contrapposto* pose, famously invented by the Greek sculptor Polykleitos in the mid-fifth century BC. Furthermore, Lady Hamilton and

[30] Callimachus, *Aphrodite (Venus Genetrix), c*.420-410 BC. The Athenian sculptor's original bronze is lost, however, many copies were made by the Romans, the first, in 46 BC, when Julius Caesar ordered a replica from the highly esteemed Greek sculptor Arcesilaus, to be placed in Rome's Temple of Venus Genetrix, which can now be found at the Louvre, Paris. Other copies are in the Hermitage, St Petersburg, and The Met, New York, see Astier Marie-Bénédicte, 'Aphrodite ("Venus Genitrix")', *Musee du Louvre,* <https://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/aphrodite-venus-genitrix> accessed 18 August 2018

Mrs Hope wear dresses inspired by the simplicity of the classical Grecian *chiton*, which is columnar in shape and girdled high on the waist.[31]

Rather than a Grecian cloak or *himation,* however, these classical influences are combined in both paintings with a modern Indian Cashmere shawl, stylistically contemporaneous with the period in which the paintings were produced. The location of Kauffman's portrait is currently unknown, therefore the form of Lady Hamilton's saffron coloured shawl with red *butis* is best examined in Raphael Morghen's engraving of the painting produced the same year (Fig. 2.4). The print clearly shows the shawl's *pallas* filled with simple mono-head *butis,* typical of the mid-eighteenth century and stylistically similar to an example from the TAPI Collection dated from 1750 to 1775 (Fig. 2.5).

The whereabouts of Dawe's original are also unknown. Only a reproduction of an engraving of the original, by the artist's brother Henry Dawe (Fig. 2.2), a miniature copy by the enamellist Henry Bone (Fig. 2.6), and Bone's preparatory drawing, are easily accessible. Bone's drawing, squared in ink for transfer to the smaller surface of the miniature (Fig. 2.7),

[31] *Chiton*: loose fitting tunic worn in ancient Greece, usually made from wool or linen

suggests Bone has been faithful to the original, and therefore provides a suggestion of Dawe's colour palette. Like Lady Hamilton's shawl, Mrs Hope's has a saffron ground, while the medium-sized *pallas* are filled with larger, predominately red and blue *butas*. The direction and shape of the discernible pattern suggests a row of repeat motifs consisting of large *butas* designed in the *millefleur* style with a bent apex. The design demonstrates an evolution in the *buta* motif from the small mono-head *buti* of the third quarter of the eighteenth century, evident in Lady Hamilton's shawl, to the larger *millefleur* designs in the early nineteenth century, which were the immediate forerunners of the archetypal 'paisley' pattern (Fig. 2.8).

The shared traits evident in these paintings and the evolution of the *buta* motif emphasise the formation of a visual lineage, one that passes the fusion of classical forms and intellectual strategies to the next generation while also evolving over time. As with familial generations, there are also significant differences between the two portraits which not only have important implications for how status is being negotiated through these images, and therefore how the Indian Cashmere shawl is

understood, but also reveal the process of assimilation which the shawl underwent in the twenty-one years between the paintings.

Sir William Hamilton was the British minister plenipotentiary to the Spanish court at Naples when he commissioned Kauffman to produce a wedding portrait to celebrate the 'coming out' of his young bride, Emma Hart.[32] The subject had to be carefully chosen, not only for a man of his position and social standing, but because his bride had an undesirable past. Hart was a lowborn artist's model who had arrived, semi-literate, in London from the countryside at the age of thirteen with only her resilience, confidence and incredible beauty with which to survive.[33] She mixed in the theatrical circles of Covent Garden; she enchanted artists, especially George Romney, as well as young aristocrats, taking up with the rakish Sir Harry Fetherstonhaugh before moving on to Charles Greville, the nephew of her future husband. After five years with Hart,

[32] Hamilton and Emma Hart were married on 6 September 1791. A letter from Kauffman to Sir William reveals he had already proposed a trip to Rome for Lady Hamilton to sit for the portrait in May 1790, E. Wolf MSS, sale, Christie's, 20 June 1990, lot 272, quoted in Ian Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases & Volcanoes*, p.272

[33] For the most recent biographical material on Emma Hamilton's youth, see Vic Gatrell, 'Early Years: Sexual Exploitation and the Lure of London', *Emma Hamilton: Seduction and Celebrity,* ed. by Quintin Colville (London: Thames & Hudson, 2016), pp.33-61; Early twentieth-century accounts of Emma Hamilton's life tend to portray her from a misogynistic point of view and concentrate on her relationship with Lord Nelson, see Edmund B. D'Auvergne, *Dear Emma, The Story of Emma Hamilton, her Husband and her Lovers* (London: 1936)

Greville wrote to his uncle in Naples to convince the diplomat to take the young woman off his hands so that he could look for a more financially advantageous marriage.[34] The duplicity of this extraordinary transaction, which saw the unsuspecting Hart shipped to Naples with her mother, is revealed in letters between Hamilton and Greville, while Hart's desperation at discovering their deception is clear in her missives to Greville begging him to take her back.[35] Nonetheless, Hart eventually acquiesced, and after five years in which Hamilton treated her with respect, she agreed to marry him.

With this backstory in mind, it is clear that to present the vivacious model Emma Hart as the respectable Lady Hamilton on canvas, she would have to be portrayed within a particular visual idiom that displayed taste and gentility.[36] Hamilton wears the costume of Thalia, the

[34] Letters from Greville to Hamilton reveal how the young and impoverished aristocrat convinced his uncle to take Emma Hart off his hands so that he could find a wealthy wife, see Alfred Morrison, *The Collection of Autograph Letters and Historical Documents Formed by Alfred Morrison: The Hamilton and Nelson Papers,* 2 vols (London: 1893–94), I, pp.98-109

[35] For a summary of the transaction between Hamilton and Greville see David Constantine, *Fields of Fire: A Life of Sir William Hamilton* (London: 2001), pp.133-53. For letters between Hart and Greville, see Morrison, *Hamilton and Nelson Papers,* esp. 'Emma Hart to Charles Greville, 30 April 1786', I, pp.114; 'Hart to Greville, 22 July 1786', I, pp.116-7; 'Hart to Greville, 1 August 1786', I, p.118-9.

[36] For a discussion on mythological costume in eighteenth century portraiture, see Aileen Ribeiro, 'Muses and mythology: classical dress in British eighteenth-century female portraiture',

inspirational Muse of comedy and pastoral poetry. A theatrical mask, held aloft in her right hand, is the Muse's attribute, which also evokes the popular eighteenth-century notion of the *theatrum mundi* within which Reynolds's portraits operated, as discussed in Chapter 1. In her 'Memorandum of Paintings' Kauffman emphasises the theatrical nature of the representation when she describes how:

> with one hand [Lady Hamilton] is lifting up a curtain as if just coming out to appear before the public, and the other hand is raising and holding up a mask which she has taken off her face; she is garbed in classical style in thin and light material. […] She is a very expressive and effective figure.[37]

The expression of feeling is certainly present in this portrait compared to Reynolds's portraits of Nancy Horton or Jane Baldwin, explicit in Hamilton's *contrapposto* pose, the tilt of her head and her tender gaze. Kauffman was an advocate for the expression of sensibility, which, as Kate Retford succinctly writes, 'emphasised the body as the

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in *Defining Dress: Dress as Object, Meaning, and Identity*, ed. by Amy De La Haye and Elizabeth Wilson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp.104-13

[37] Lady Victoria Manners and George Charles Williamson, *Angelica Kauffman, R.A.: Her Life and Her Works* (New York: Brentano's, 1924), p.161; For a recent analysis of the painting see Angela Rosenthal, *Angelica Kauffman: Art and Sensibility* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), pp.182-7

conduit of internal virtues and demanded authenticity and spontaneous feeling'.[38] Using a mythological guise provided a means to express the personal creativity and talent of the sitter within a classical canon, but it was also a form of performance that attempted to situate the sitter in a particular social category, a mode of representation prevalent for aristocratic women.[39] For all its sensibility, the portrait still conforms, through its performative nature, to some of the notions of politeness embedded in eighteenth-century society.[40] As Historian John Brewer explains, politeness provided a set of rules for interacting with people in order to temper individual interests for the good of the general public, 'to regulate one's passions and to cultivate good taste' through 'self-discipline' and 'refined, moderate sociability'.[41] Politeness, therefore, had particular implications for cultural expression:

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[38] Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life*, p.9; Sensibility and the literary expression of feelings, came 'into consciousness', as Michael Bell writes, from the mid-eighteenth century, expounded in the novels of Samuel Richardson (*Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740) and Clarissa Harlowe or the History of a young Lady, 1748), Laurence Sterne (*A Sentimental Journey,* 1768), and Henry MacKenzie (*The Man of Feeling,* 1771). See Michael Bell, *Sentimentalism, Ethics and the Culture of Feeling* (Basingstoke: 2000), p.18, pp.11-56

[39] Mark Hallett discusses the use of mythological guises in Reynolds's paintings of aristocratic women in the 1770s, see Hallet, *Joshua Reynolds*, pp.193-217

[40] Rosenthal, *Kauffman: Art and Sensibility,* p.3

[41] Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, p.91, for a summary on how the notion of politeness developed over the eighteenth century, see pp.89-101

> Politeness created a complete system of manners and conduct based on the arts of conversation. It placed the arts and imaginative literature at the centre of its aim to produce people of taste and morality because they were considered the means of achieving a polite and virtuous character. […] politeness represented the world as a theatre in which one was obliged to perform before one's fellow men.[42]

A slippage between the notions of politeness and sensibility, which were rigorously debated around the time the portrait was produced, is thus evident in the painting. 'For all the tensions between them, sentiment and politeness coexisted,' Brewer argues, and 'even between the 1760s and 1790s, at the height of the rage for sensibility, the language of politeness was never abandoned'.[43]

Portraits of women costumed as the classical Graces, Muses, and Bacchantes in Grecian-style drapery had become popular from the 1770s, most notably for artists like Joshua Reynolds, George Romney, Gavin Hamilton, Elizabeth Vigée Le Brun and Angelica Kauffman. Before her marriage, Lady Hamilton had already posed for Reynolds in 1783 as a Bacchante and in 1790 as Euphrosyne, the Grace of Mirth, for Vigeé

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[42] Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, p.98
[43] Ibid, p.101

Lebrun. For Romney she sat for dozens of paintings conceived as various classical characters, from Circe (1782), Medea (1783) and Thetis (1785) to Hebe (1786) and a host of others. Collectively, these paintings were well received and were described in the 5 February 1787 edition of the *World and Fashionable Advertiser* as 'full of captivation'.[44]

Much admired for her beauty, the young model's success is evident, both in these paintings and in the records of her contemporaries. Romney's admiration is clear when, in June 1791, he writes to the poet William Hayley explaining that over the summer he would be 'engaged in painting pictures from *the divine lady*: I cannot give her any other epithet; for I think her superior to all womankind'.[45] In his biography of Romney, Hayley emphasises Hart's importance for and influence over the artist's work, citing 'her particular force, and variations of feeling, countenance and gesture', which had 'inspirited and ennobled the

[44] 'Arts', *World and Fashionable Advertiser* (5 February 1787), p.3; For a list of works for which Emma Hamilton modelled, see Margaret A. Hanni, 'Hart, Emma (Lady Hamilton)', *Dictionary of Artists' Models*, ed. by Jill Berk Jiminez (New York & London: Routledge, 2001), p.266

[45] 'Letter from Romney to the poet, Hayley, 19 June 1791', *The Letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford: including Numerous Letters Now First Published From the Original Manuscripts*, ed. by John Wright, 6 vols (London: Richard Bentley, 1840), VI, p.431, n.2

productions of his art'.[46] Hayley's description suggests that Hart possessed talent in the eyes of her contemporaries. Specifically, Hayley points out her 'great practical ability' in music and her 'exquisite taste' in painting, as well as 'such expressive powers as could furnish to an historical painter, an inspiring model for the various characters, either delicate, or sublime, that he might have occasion to represent'.[47]

In the arts, as Shaftesbury argues, 'we not only confess a taste, but make it a part of refined breeding to discover amidst the many false manners and ill styles the true and natural one'.[48] For Romney, Emma Hart possessed the features to 'exhibit all the feelings of nature'.[49] The combination of her natural beauty and classical features, her fine figure and her artistic ability to assume any character with expressed gravitas, made her the perfect model for ancient Grecian Muses. She was, according to Cardinal Carlo Rezzonico, nephew of Pope Clement XIII,

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[46] William Hayley, *The Life of George Romney* (London: T. Payne, 1809), pp.119-20; For the most extensive research on Romney, see Alex Kidson, *George Romney: A Complete Catalogue of His Paintings*, 3 vols (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015)

[47] Hayley, *The Life of George Romney*, pp.119-20

[48] Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, I, p.338

[49] Hayley, *The Life of George Romney*, pp.119-20

'worthy of being the new Campaspe, a canon of beauty for those English Apelles'.[50]

Despite her colourful background and sexual entanglements, Lady Hamilton projects the 'social *Virtues*' of the '*moral* GRACES', which Shaftesbury describes as 'essential to the Character of a deserving Artist, and just Favourite of the MUSES'.[51] Shaftesbury's emphasis on the '*moral* GRACES' is significant, particularly in light of Kauffman and Hamilton's choice of muse for Lady Hamilton's portrait. Many paintings of classical Muses, as Marcia Pointon has noted, provided a 'site of fantasy'.[52] Choosing the more erotically charged Grace of Mirth Euphrosyne, for example, would only highlight Lady Hamilton's past.[53] As Vigée Le Brun's portrait *Emma Hamilton as Euphrosyne* (1790–92) (Fig. 2.9) demonstrates, the sense of wildness and abandon is striking in

[50] Conte della Torre Rezzonico (Cardinal Carlo Rezzonico 1724–99), quoted in Hanni, 'Hart, Emma', p.269

[51] Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*, p.338

[52] Marcia Pointon, *Strategies for Showing: Women, Possession, and Representation in English Visual Culture, 1665–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.175

[53] Thalia, the Muse should not be confused with Thalia the Grace or Charity. Although they were both daughters of Zeus, the Grace was one of three daughters by Eurynome (the Three Graces), while the Muse was one of nine daughters by Mnemosyne. Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases & Volcanoes,* pp.272-3; For a detailed discussion of classical mythologizing in eighteenth-century portraits of women and their erotic overtones, see Pointon, *Strategies for Showing,* p.173-221

comparison to Kauffman's more measured composition in *Thalia*.[54] As Euphrosyne, Lady Hamilton's hair is unbound and cascading down her back in waves that visually emphasise the forward motion of her body. As Thalia, her hair is tightly curled around her face, its length hidden from sight. Euphrosyne is outdoors with the dangers of a smoking Vesuvius in the background and a tambourine pushed high into the top left-hand corner of the canvas, suggesting the frame is unable to contain the sound of the music, the rising smoke from the volcano and the Grace's passion. By contrast, as Thalia, Lady Hamilton's body is contained, not only by the miniature of her husband clamped to her waist like a metaphorical chastity belt, but within the heavy green curtains on the right which serve to subdue the natural sensuality suggested in the tilt of her head and the elongation of her neck as it rises from a low décolletage. The composition thus provides limitations to Lady Hamilton's 'exuberance and sensuality'; it imposes classical principles of

[54] That is not to say that Thalia was always portrayed as tasteful, balanced and morally acceptable. John Hoppner's portrait of Dorothy Jordan as Thalia was vehemently criticised for its inappropriate lack of dignity and sexual innuendo (Fig. 2.10); See Gill Perry, 'Musing on muses: representing the actress as 'artist' in British art of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries', *Women, scholarship and criticism: Gender and Knowledge c.1790–1900,* ed. by Joan Bellamy, Anne Laurence and Gill Perry (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), p.32

order and balance and attempts to signal a notion of 'moral limit' and 'a standard of public acceptance'.[55] The folds of the Cashmere shawl draped across her body, however, create a sense of sensual movement across the canvas suggesting the shawl still carries exoticism and theatricality.

The use of an Indian Cashmere shawl in Kauffman's painting is almost certainly influenced by Lady Hamilton's famous Attitudes, which she began performing in 1786 for the ambassador's guests shortly after she arrived in Naples. Attitudes are a unique mimoplastic art form, related to *tableaux vivants* and *poses plastiques,* which consist of the performance artist capturing and holding a series of dramatic poses derived from classical antiquity or well-known artworks.[56] No doubt Lady Hamilton drew on the skills she developed during her decade of modelling in London, where she had inhabited the 'personas that Romney drew from ancient mythology, Old Masters paintings and

[55] Smith, *Consumption and Respectability,* p.81

[56] Attitudes should not be confused with the shawl dance, which shared the use of tunic and shawls, but included dance movements and musical accompaniment, see Kirsten Gram Holmström, *Monodrama, Attitudes, Tableaux Vivants, studies on some trends of theatrical fashion 1770–1815,* (Stockholm, Almqvist & Wiksell, 1967), pp.198-9. Holmström describes attitudes as 'that strange manifestation which enjoyed a vogue in the aesthetic life of the neo-classical period' among distinguished 'coteries of aristocrats and intellectuals who indulged in these theatrical diversions.' What may have started out as fashionable party entertainment came to be regarded as an independent art form, pp.110-40, 252 n.2

Shakespearian drama [which] provided her with a store of intellectual reference and performative experience'.[57] Her fluidity and mobility amazed those who watched her. As one visitor observed, after taking up her position in the middle of the room,

> [s]he threw a shawl over her head which reached the ground and covered her entirely, and thus hidden, draped herself with the other shawls. Then she suddenly raised the covering, either throwing it off entirely or half raising it, making it form part of the drapery of the model which she represented. But she always appeared as a statue of most admirable design.[58]

When Goethe travelled to Naples in 1787, he was struck by her 'variety of posture, expression and look', and her ability to move rapidly from one 'mental state' to another had a profound effect on him as he 'almost fancies it a dream'.[59] Commenting on the 'perfection, in movement, in ravishing variety', he notes the qualities that all 'the greatest artists have

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[57] Quintin Colville, *Emma Hamilton*, p.161; Holmström, *Monodrama, Attitudes*, pp.135-6

[58] Charlotte Louise Eleonore Boigne, *Mémoires de Comtesse de Boigne,* ed. by Charles Nicoulaud (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), p.100

[59] J.W. von Goethe, *Travels in Italy,* transl. by A.J.W. Morrisson and C. Nisbet, (London: George Bell & Sons, 1892), p.199; see also Frances Newman, 'Noctes Neapolitanae: Sir William Hamilton and Emma, Lady Hamilton at the Court of Ferdinand IV', *Illinois Classical Studies*, 27-28 (2002–03), p.223

rejoiced to be able to produce'. [60] Lady Elizabeth Foster records in her journal some of Lady Hamilton's classical subjects—'a Helena, Cassandra or Andromache'—adding that 'no Grecian or Trojan Princess could have had a more perfect or more commanding form' and emphasising that they were 'performed with the help alone of two shawls'. The results were clearly well received as 'every one was perfect—everything she did was just and beautiful'.[61] Cardinal Rezzonico, who claimed never to have seen 'anything more fluid and graceful, more sublime and heroic', is astounded that the ambassador's wife has 'single-handedly created a living gallery of statues and paintings'.[62]

Frederick Rehberg captures a sense of the variety in Lady Hamilton's 'gallery' in a series of twelve drawings produced in 1794. In one, Lady Hamilton becomes Sophonisbe holding up her cup of poison as she leans on a term in despair (Fig. 2.11); in another, she is the Muse

[60] Goethe, *Travels in Italy,* p.199

[61] Dorothy Margaret Stuart, *Dearest Bess: The Life and Times of Lady Elizabeth Foster, afterwards Duchess of Devonshire from Her Unpublished Journals and Correspondence* (London: Methuen, 1955), p.59

[62] Francesco Mocchetti, *Opere del Cavaliere Carlo Castone, Conte della Torre Rezzo, VII: Gionale del Viaggo di Napoli negli Anni 1789 e 1790* (Como: Carlantonio Ostinelli, 1819), pp.247-8, quoted and translated by Anthony Griffiths and Frances Carey, *German Printmaking in the Age of Goethe* (London: British Museum Press, 1994), p.260

Terpsichore, twisting her body in perfect *contrapposto* with the shawl that sweeps down and round her (Fig. 2.12); in a third, she is Niobe mourning the death of her children at the hands of Apollo and Artemis, her head shrouded by her shawl, a hand covering her eyes as she carries the limp body of a child (Fig. 2.13). It is hard to imagine the full effect of the Attitudes from these clean outline style engravings as they give the impression that the scenes were chromatically minimal in imitation of contemporary ideas of classical marble statues. Goethe's second reference to the Attitudes, in May 1787, suggests that her costume was brightly coloured like the antique frescoes from Pompeii.[63] It is most likely that the bright colour refers to the shawls rather than the dress, as all the other commentators who describe her Attitudes describe her dress as 'white':

> she was usually dressed in a white tunic girded around the waist; her hair floated or was raised by a comb, but without having the form of any hairstyle. When she agreed to give a performance, she accessorized with a couple of cashmere shawls, an urn, a pan, a lyre, a tambourine.[64]

[63] Holmström, *Monodrama, Attitudes*, pp.110-1
[64] Boigne, *Mémoires,* p.99

Lady Hamilton's unique 'Grecian statues' were inspired by a number of sources other than famous classical sculptures.[65] As Cardinal Rezzonico's description reveals, some were derived from visual sources, like her 'Sophonisbe in taking the cup of poison', a subject extremely popular with artists, from Mantegna in the fifteenth century to Pellegrini in the eighteenth century. Other sources were literary, like 'the Virgilian Galatea' or the desperate 'Gabriella de Vergy, on discovering the heart of her warrior lover still beating in the fatal vase'.[66] Her primary sources, however, were Hamilton's vase collections and the catalogues he produced with d'Hancarville and Tischbein. Lady Hamilton's 'Helena' pose, witnessed by Lady Foster, for example, can be found on a red-figure neck-amphora of Helena being pursued by Menelaos (470–60 BC) in the British Museum from Hamilton's first collection (Fig. 2.14), which was also reproduced in d'Hancarville's catalogue (Fig. 2.15).[67]

These catalogues were produced to fulfil Hamilton's greater aims of educating and inspiring artists by demonstrating a classical lineage. Lady

[65] Horace Walpole, 'Letter to Miss Berry, 17 August 1791', *Letters of Horace Walpole,* p.452
[66] Mocchetti, *Carlo Castone*, pp. 247-8, in Griffiths and Carey, *German Printmaking*, p.260
[67] d'Hancarville, *Collection of Etruscan, Greek and Roman Antiquities,* IV, plate 94

Hamilton's performances, 'in conformity with her husband's taste' in subject and drapery, were an integral part of that process.[68] The Aphrodite pose assumed by Lady Hamilton in Kauffman's painting (Fig. 2.1) is also sourced directly from Hamilton's vase collection. The gesture of raising the *chiton* or mantle from the right shoulder is derived from the unveiling of the bride, or *anakalypteria*, which is symbolically significant for Hamilton's portrait.[69] However, as a selection of scenes on the vases in Hamilton's collection shows, the gesture appears also to be used in a more generic sense to signal that the subject is on display or has something to reveal (Fig. 2.16). Tischbein writes that 'it was a custom always observed when anyone desired to obtain a favour of a person invested with the supreme authority'.[70] Two of Tischbein's drawings appear to confirm this, one representing a priestess renouncing her duties to Apollo while lifting her *chiton* at her right shoulder (Fig. 2.17), the

[68] Boigne, *Mémoires,* p.99

[69] Gloria S. Merker, 'The Sanctuary of Demeter and Kore: Terracotta Figurines of the Classical, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods', *Corinth,* 18:4 (New Jersey: Princeton, 2000), pp.149, 174

[70] M. W. Tischbein, *Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases, mostly of pure Greek Workmanship, discovered in Sepulchres in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, but chiefly in the neighbourhood of Naples during the course of the years 1789 and 1790, now in the possession of Sir William Hamilton, His Britannic Maiesty's Envoy Extr. And Plenipotentiary at the Court of Naples,* 3 vols (Naples: Royal Academy of Painting, 1791), III, p.88

other showing the daughter of Aleus, the King of Tegea, with the first priestess, both using the gesture in an attempt to 'soften the rigour of the king' who is about to pass a death sentence on his own daughter (Fig. 2.18).[71]

Lady Hamilton's Attitudes appear to have fulfilled her husband's educational aims. As the classicist Sue Blundell argues, Lady Hamilton's Attitudes were considered by some artists on the Grand Tour as essential viewing for their education in antiquity. She cites a letter from the English artist William Artaud to his father, which mentions Lady Hamilton's Attitudes in a list of experiences in the 'environs of Naples [that] are truly Classic ground', on a par with Lake Avernus, the Elysian Fields, the Baths of Nero, Herculaneum, Pompeii and the museum at Portici.[72]

Kauffman was said to have been extremely moved by the Attitudes and 'tearfully kissed Lady Hamilton's hand a thousand times' after witnessing her perform, but she was also most likely inspired by Lady

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[71] Tischbein, *Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases,* II, p.40, pl.16; III, pp.86-8, pl.53

[72] William Artaud, 'Letter to his father', quoted in Sue Blundell, 'Greek Art and the Grand Tour', *A Companion to Greek Art*, ed. by Tyler Jo Smith and Dimitris Plantzos (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), p.656

Hamilton's costume.[73] Contemporary accounts confirm that she was 'draped exactly like a Grecian statue' in the same combination of white muslin dress and 'Indian' or 'Cashmere shawl' as that used in Kauffman's *Thalia* portrait.[74] She produced, to borrow Horace Walpole's pithy line, 'antique statues in an Indian shawl'.[75] These shawls were the fundamental objects used by Lady Hamilton to segue from one Attitude to the next, but they were also the objects that signified 'wonderful taste', as Goethe had commented on seeing the 'folding of her shawls' to achieve each expression.[76] The meaning of Cashmere shawl thus also segues between theatrical and tasteful.

Recent discussions on what inspired Lady Hamilton's use of shawls as a transformative device suggest the unveiling of Galatea in the Pygmalion myth, a connection some have seen as reinforced by Thomas Rowlandson's caricature *Lady H*******'s Attitudes* (*c*.1791) (Fig. 2.19).[77] Art

[73] Michael Krapf, 'Angelica Kauffman Paints Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: "He's a handsome enough fellow, but there's no trace of me in him"', *Angelica Kauffman: A Woman of Immense Talent,* ed. by Tobias Günter Natter (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2007), p.55

[74] Walpole, 'Letter to Miss Berry, 17 August 1791', *The Letters of Horace Walpole,* p.452-3; de Boigne, *Mémoires*, pp.99-100; Stuart, *Dearest Bess*, p.59; Goethe, *Travels in Italy*, p.199

[75] Walpole, 'Letter to Miss Berry, 17 August 1791', p.452-3

[76] Goethe, *Travels in Italy*, p.199

[77] Holmström, *Monodrama, Attitudes,* p.115

historian Ann Bermingham convincingly argues, however, that Rowlandson was simply responding to Horace Walpole's quip that 'Sir William has actually married his gallery of statues'.[78] More recently, the classicist Frances Newman has pointed to ancient Roman pantomimes in which the *pallium* or mantle was used to imitate 'a swan's tail, Venus' tresses, [or] the Fury's scourge'.[79]

There were other possible influences with more direct links to India, which may have disseminated the idea of using Indian shawls for performance. Babaiourn, a *bayadère* (sacred Hindu dancer), is said to have caused a sensation when she performed her *pas de schall* at private functions in Paris in 1768 using Indian shawls.[80] The *bayadères* at the court of 'Tippo Saib' were given particular attention in a London newspaper in 1784, which described them as 'most remarkable for their beauty and talent'.[81] Accounts of Kashmiri *nautch* girls (dancers), who also used shawls in their performances, were brought to the attention of

[78] Bermingham, 'The Aesthetics of Ignorance', p.16

[79] Newman, 'Noctes Neapolitanae', p.222

[80] Kirsten Gram Holmström, 'Attitude and Shawl Dance', *International Encyclopedia of Dance,* ed. by Selma Jeanne Cohen et al. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.199

[81] 'Court of Tippoo Saib', *London Chronicle* (14 August 1784), p.164

the British public through travellers such as Jemima Kindersley, who wrote in 1764:

> the performance consists chiefly in a continual removing the shawl, first over the head, then off again; extending first one hand, then the other.[82]

While any or all of these performances may have influenced Lady Hamilton, the explanations fail to consider the accounts of Lady Hamilton's shawls written by her contemporaries, who explicitly describe them as 'Indian' or 'Cashmere', thus bringing together two cultures.[83] Lady Hamilton's specific use of Indian Cashmere shawls effectively positioned her at the epicentre of the shawls transformation. Even if she 'exchanged her classical tunic for ordinary dress' after performing her Attitudes, she—and her shawls—were seen as objects of transformation which had an impact on her audience.[84] When Goethe was struck by the 'experience of seeing the expression of emotion in combination with

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[82] Jemima Kindersley, 'Letters from the island of Teneriffe, Brazil, by Mrs Jemima Kindersley, 1777' quoted in Nandini Bhattacharya, *Reading the Splendid Body: gender and consumerism in eighteenth-century British writing on India* (London: Associated University Presses, 1998), p.142

[83] Walpole, 'Letter to Miss Berry, 17 August 1791', p.452-3; de Boigne, *Mémoires*, pp.99-100; Stuart, *Dearest Bess*, p.59; Goethe, *Travels in Italy*, p.199

[84] Boigne, *Mémoires,* p.101

classical art' he was responding to this transformation.[85] And when Horace Walpole retorted, 'what do the Venuses, Flores, Hercules, and a thousand others tell, but the magic art of the sculptor, and their own graces and proportions?' he implies that by animating images that captured the grace and proportion of classical Grecian design principles, Lady Hamilton's 'wonderful expression' dissolves the line between art and life.[86] She brought antiquity into the present day, draped it in an Indian garment and gave flesh and blood to cold white marble.

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In the years leading up to Lady Hamilton's use of Indian Cashmere shawls in her Attitudes, there was a fundamental shift in British perceptions of Indian culture, which began with William Pitt's 1784 India Act.[87] The Act established a Board of Control intended to rein in the corruption that had become institutionalised in the East India

[85] Holmström, 'Attitude and Shawl Dance', pp.198-9
[86] Walpole, Letter to Miss Berry, 17 August 1791, p.452-3
[87] Parliamentary Archives: 'India Act 1784', HL/PO/PU/1/1784/24G3S2n2

Company.[88] In response to Pitt's call for reforms, the Governor-General of India Warren Hastings implemented two strategies that would fundamentally shape colonial governance in India, as well as British perceptions of Indian culture. The first was the introduction of a legal system based on ancient Indian jurisprudence rather than an imposed British system.[89] The second was to encourage the pursuit of knowledge in Indian culture and history, 'driven in part by an Enlightenment enthusiasm' and, in Hastings's words as 'part of a System which I long since laid down, and supported for reconciling the People of England to the Natives of Hindostan.[90] At the centre of both these enterprises was the need for British jurists to learn Sanskrit, a process that would set in motion a new type of orientalist scholarship, focused on Indian antiquities and the Sanskrit language, making India's ancient past

[88] John Keay, *The Honourable Company: A History of the English East India Company* (London: Macmillan, 1991), p.390

[89] Barbara Daly Metcalf and Thomas R. Metcalf, *A Concise History of India,* 2nd edn (Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.62; The Metcalfs provide a history of modern India, which explores the institutional structures, as well as intellectual and conceptual notions that shaped the country, see esp. Ch.3

[90] See also Thomas R. Trautmann, 'Wilkins, Sir Charles (bap. 1749, d. 1836)', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29416>; 'Hastings to Jonathan Scott, 9 December 1784', BL Add MS. 29129, f. 275

accessible to all.[91] In 1776, East India Company servant Charles Wilkins became the first Englishman to learn Sanskrit, and by 1784, together with Hastings and a small group of orientalists, he founded the Asiatick Society of Bengal, dedicated to the study of 'the religious and cosmological texts of Ancient India'.[92] Calcutta became the centre of a new type of orientalism, which, as historian Thomas Trautmann argues, 'had a considerable vogue in Europe in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries'.[93] The idea prevailed that the study of Indian antiquities and languages would initiate an 'Oriental Renaissance' in the same way the revival of Greek and Roman antiquities brought about the Italian Renaissance.[94]

Sir William Jones, a judge at Fort William in Bengal since 1783, was elected the first president of the Asiatick Society of Bengal.[95] By February 1786, only six months after taking up the language, Jones had mastered Sanskrit and made public for the first time the notion that there

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[91] Metcalf and Metcalf, *History of India,* pp.58-9; Trautmann, 'Wilkins, Sir Charles'
[92] Trautmann, 'Wilkins, Sir Charles'
[93] Ibid
[94] Ibid
[95] Franklin, *'Orientalist Jones'*, p.1

was a connection between ancient Indian and ancient Greco-Roman culture.[96] His 'Third Anniversary Discourse', which was widely distributed in Europe, declared that the Sanskrit language was:

> more perfect than the *Greek*, more copious than the *Latin*, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a strong affinity, both in the roots of the verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed that no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which perhaps no longer exists.[97]

Although politically this breakdown of British linguistic hegemony, combined with the romantic notion of a shared origin, may have been dangerous, culturally it opened the door to a new view on the classical western pedigree and how it interacted with ancient Indian culture.[98] If Jones's linguistic discovery excited philologists and antiquarians, his translation of *Śakuntalā,* a Hindu mythological drama by Calidāsa—whom he describes as 'the Indian Shakespeare' and chief poet at the court of Vicramāditya (375–414 AD)—would create what historian Michael Franklin

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[96] Ibid, p.36

[97] *The Works of Sir William Jones*, ed. by Anna Maria Jones, 13 vols (London: John Stockdale and John Walker, 1807), III, pp.34-5; For a detailed study of Jones's work and legacy on the Indo-European languages, see Franklin, *'Orientalist Jones'*, pp.1-42

[98] Franklin, *'Orientalist Jones'*, pp.37-42

dubs 'the *Śakuntalā* fever that gripped Europe in the early 1790s', utterly changing Western conceptions of India.[99] Here was 'a precious *morçeau*' for the 'Man of taste' and the 'philosopher', the writer Mary Wollstonecraft eulogised, an orientalism 'at once intensely seductive and profoundly classical'.[100] Jones presented British audiences with a 'sophisticated and accessible' Indian culture, banishing the 'monstrous gods and demonic devotees' so emblematic of Western representations of Hinduism. As theologist Sharada Sugirtharajah argues, he was trying to demonstrate that Europeans were 'not encountering a strange culture but their own culture in a primitive form'; they were, in other words, 'rediscovering their own pagan past in Hinduism'.[101]

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[99] Ibid, pp.252-53; see n4 for explanation on dating inaccuracies. Following its publication, *Śakuntalā* was translated no fewer than forty-six times, in twelve different languages. Jones writes about Calidāsa in a letter to Althorp, later Lord Spencer in September 1787, quoted in Franklin

[100] Mary Wollstonecraft, 'Sacontalá; Or, The Fatal Ring: An Indian Drama', *Analytical Review: Or History of Literature, Domestic and Foreign, on an Enlarged Plan*, 7 (1790), p.361; Franklin, *'Orientalist Jones'*, pp.251-2; 256

[101] Sharada Sugirtharajah, *Imagining Hinduism: A Postcolonial Perspective*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), p.3

As British Indology strengthened the ties between ancient Hindu and Grecian culture—weaving aspects of Indian mathematics, philosophy and mythology into the classical pedigree championed by Sir William Hamilton and given expression by Lady Hamilton in her Attitudes—so the antiquarian and connoisseur Thomas Hope began pulling the threads of taste from Hamilton's aesthetic into the nineteenth century and interweaving them with Indian iconography and artefacts. Where Hamilton had looked backwards to antiquity, Thomas Hope would bring antiquity forward into the modern world. In so doing he had a profound impact on Regency taste.

In 1801 Hope purchased a substantial selection of Hamilton's second vase collection to display in a specially designed room at his London mansion in Duchess Street.[102] On the terms (or termini) supporting some of the fictile vases the bearded faces of the 'Indian' Bacchus provided a metaphor for the kind of appropriation and assimilation Hope practiced (Fig. 2.20).[103] As he explains in his publication *Household Furniture and*

[102] Watkin, *Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical Idea*; *Thomas Hope: Regency Designer*, ed. by Watkin and Hewat-Jaboor

[103] Term or terminus (pl. termini) in architecture is a square pillar ending in the figure of a human bust or animal head, originally used to mark boundaries in ancient Rome.

Interior Decoration (1807), when Bacchus returned from India—a region 'which the Grecian philosophers venerated as the cradle of science and the earliest seat of wisdom'—he is said to have appropriated 'the gravity of old age, and let his beard grow, in order to more resemble the Gymnosophists, or sages of India, with whom he had conversed'.[104] For Hope, 'the formal symmetry' of these Indian-inspired faces 'unites most happily' with his collection of Grecian fictile vases. Like Hamilton's, his projects were woven on the warp threads of Ancient Greece, 'the ultimate source of his enthusiasms', but his weft threads were multi-cultured, interweaving styles from India and the Near East.[105] At Duchess Street—which boasted a number of rooms themed to display cultural effects from different ancient styles—his India or Blue Room contained three very large paintings of picturesque Indian landscapes by William Daniell, and one of the Forum in Rome, which were commissioned to

[104] Thomas Hope, *Household Furniture and Interior Decoration* (London: Longman, 1807), pp.49-50, pl. LVII

[105] Watkin, *Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical Idea*, p.99

'harmonise' with the classical furniture (Fig. 2.21).[106] Together they show two complementary and interacting civilisations.

In an early drawing from the late 1780s from the Benaki Album, Hope had already visualised this fusion in Greek and Indian costume.[107] The title of the drawing lists the ethnographic types presented in a line across the page: 'Tartar Messenger, Greek lady, French Merchant's Wife, Embassador's Jenissary, Greek Lady, Greek Woman, Taooishan' (Fig. 2.22). While the French merchant's wife is portrayed wearing the exaggerated feathered headdress, voluminous side hoops and sweeping train of the most outlandish Parisian fashion trends, the three Greek women are portrayed with quiet dignity wearing simple robes accessorised with an Indian Cashmere shawl (Fig. 2.23). Two of the Greek ladies display shawls in the typical mid- to late-eighteenth-century style of medium *pallas* populated with *buti,* also worn by Lady Hamilton in Kauffman's portrait. The other woman wears a shawl with *pallas* displaying a row of clearly defined large *buta* in the same general style as

[106] Ibid, p.110

[107] Benaki Museum, Athens: Benaki Album, vol. II, no. 27112, reproduced in *Thomas Hope: Regency Designer*, ed. by Watkin and Hewat-Jaboor, p.77

Mrs Hope's shawl in Dawe's portrait. As Watkin argues, Hope's style falls on the continuum of a pedigree at the height of two great and corresponding cultural revivals, the Greek and the Indian.[108]

George Dawe's 1812 portrait of Hope's wife Louisa brings together those two great revivals in a form inherited from Lady Hamilton's 'Grecian statue in an Indian shawl': her Aphrodite pose, classical-inspired dress and an Indian Cashmere shawl. Mrs Hope wears a high-waisted red velvet dress, girdled with a thin golden rope and sporting slightly puckered white satin sleeves trimmed with gold cameo armlets. The hem is patterned with a Grecian tendril design and a long double-strand necklace is worn diagonally across her fashionably low décolletage.[109] Her Indian Cashmere shawl falls from her right hand raised above her head, creating a backdrop for her vibrant red dress. With her other hand she pulls the shawl around from behind her back while lifting her dress just enough to reveal her pale satin slippers and create a flourish of folds in the red velvet that draw the eye back up to the raised hand. While the gesture of the raised shawl recalls the Grecian goddess it is also

[108] Watkin, *Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical Idea,* p.233
[109] Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress*, p.221

reminiscent of Rehberg's drawings of Lady Hamilton's dramatically posed Attitudes in the crisp classical outline style. The effect is one of containment, control and stasis, as if Mrs Hope is frozen in time like a statue. Unlike the slippage in meaning from theatrical to tasteful projected in Lady Hamilton's shawl, Mrs Hope's shawl is presented as the epitome of good taste for a woman of statuesque elegance and respectability.

Mrs Hope had modelled for two of her husband's influential publications, which also drew on the classical outline drawing style established by Tischbein, Flaxman and Rehberg: *Costume of the Ancients* was published in 1809 and *Designs of Modern Costume* in 1812.[110] These publications demonstrate that Hope, like Lady Hamilton, was also concerned with how to transition from one aesthetic look to another, but in Hope's case the transformation he sought was from the classical to the modern rather than from one classical scene to another. As Watkin states, Hope attempted to 'influence the character of the latter by promoting

[110] Thomas Hope, *Costume of the Ancients*, 2 vols (London: William Miller 1809); Thomas Hope, *Designs of Modern Costume,* 1st publ. 1812, ed. by John Nevinson (London: Costume Society, 1973); For Mrs Hope's modelling see Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress*, p.220

knowledge of the former'.[111] In many ways Dawe's painting of Mrs Hope is the culmination of that project as the aesthetic Hope disseminated had transformed from Attitude to *à la mode*.

In June 1809 the 'Arbiter Elegantiarum' of Rudolph Ackermann's *Repository of Arts, Literature, Commerce, Manufactures, Fashions, and Politics*—which has been described as an 'essential guide to the Regency period'[112]—declared *Costume of the Ancients* responsible for 'the late change in dress'.[113] Gone were the days of witty rococo hedonism, ruffled polonaise dresses and gigantic powdered hair that adorned the canvases of artists in the eighteenth century, or what the American engraver James Pellar Malcolm described in *Anecdotes of the Manners and Customs of London* (1808) as the 'follies of thirty years' with their 'false breasts, pads, and bottoms'.[114] In their place, Hope was advocating the simplicity of classical Grecian style, writing in his introduction to *Costume of the Ancients* about the:

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[111] Watkin, *Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical Idea,* p.35

[112] Thomas S. R. Boase, *The Oxford History of English Art 1800-1870,* 11 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), X, p.48

[113] Arbiter Elegantiarum, 'Fashions for Ladies and Gentlemen', *Repository of Arts, Literature, Commerce, Manufactures, Fashions, and Politics*, I:6 (June, 1809), pp.397-8

[114] James Pellar Malcolm, *Anecdotes of the Manners and Customs of London*, (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1808), pp.448-9

> beauty of form, that sublimity of expression, that knowledge of external anatomy, that prodigious diversity in the texture of stuffs, and in the form of folds, that inexpressible elegance and that endless variety in the throw of the drapery.[115]

His words are reminiscent of Joshua Reynolds's approbation of ancient Greco-Roman dress in his *Seventh Discourse* (1776) for the 'simplicity of them, consisting of little more than one single piece of drapery, without whimsical, capricious forms by which all other dresses are embarrassed'.[116] Some of these qualities, particularly relating to the folds and variety in the throw of drapery, are expressed in the delicate lines of the fabric that clings to the sensual shapes of the bodies in Hope's drawings. One plate in particular, 'Grecian female from a fictile vase' (Fig. 2.24), is a full-length frontal image of a Greek woman wearing a *chiton* and displaying a patterned *epiblema* (or shawl) in the pose of the *Venus Genetrix*. It is strikingly similar to Dawe's painting, suggesting that the ideas and visual schemes which Hope passionately advocated flowed between all the participants in his Regency aesthetic, from furniture

[115] Hope, *Costume of the Ancients*, I, pp.11-2
[116] Reynolds, 'Seventh Discourse', pp.199-201

makers, costume designers and artists to his wife who embodied his drawings and his ideas.[117]

Acknowledging that his own simple outline drawings could never do justice to the ancient originals, Hope nonetheless argues that even 'the humblest imitations which still preserve any feature of resemblance' would afford the artist 'some valuable examples of easy and graceful attitudes', as well as presenting to women in general 'some useful hints for improving the elegance and dignity' of their attire.[118] It is clear that Hope's primary aim, like Sir William Hamilton's before him, was 'instructing artists' by supplying 'repertory specimens' of classical Greek costumes and a catalogue of 'graceful attitudes' in order to improve the inadequate state of British history painting.[119] For progress to be made, Hope insists artists have to 'bring the historical fabric to its full perfection'.[120]

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[117] Hope, *Costume of the Ancients,* II, plate 113
[118] Hope, *Costume of the Ancients,* I, pp.11-2
[119] Ibid, I, pp.7, 10-1
[120] Ibid, I, p.4

> For however happy the expression of his countenance, however correct the drawing of his figures, without truth of costume, the story cannot be clearly told, the spectator cannot be brought home to the scene, the picture must forever remain a riddle.[121]

Hope's intentions, however, are more ambitious for he wants to reform not only the arts but also contemporary taste in furniture design, interior design and fashion, a feat Ackerman's *Repository* seems to believe he has achieved:

> To the exertions of this gentleman almost all our modern improvements in taste may be referred. It is hoped the publication will become the *vade-mecum* and toilet-companion of every lady distinguished in the circles of fashion.'[122]

The year Dawe's painting was commissioned and engraved by Henry Moses was a momentous one for Hope: his *Costume of the Ancients* was reprinted in an enlarged edition with 170 extra plates, at the affordable price of two guineas; he published *Designs of Modern Costume,* which provides a series of tableaux showing how the classical style can be incorporated into modern life; and the *Repository* printed a fashion plate

[121] Ibid, I, p.5

[122] Arbiter Elegantiarum, 'Fashions for Ladies and Gentlemen', pp.397-8; Hope, *Costume of the Ancients,* I, p.12

illustrating a woman in 'Evening Dress', which reflects Hope's aesthetic (Fig. 2.25).[123] The timing suggests that Hope's work had indeed become the *vade mecum* for the fashion business and for distinguished ladies.[124] From the *Repository*'s simple loose drapery, devoid of hoops or petticoats, the 'crimson *Cashmire*, richly bordered at the ends', which is draped around the model, and the tightly curled hair framing the model's face, to the three-quarter pose with head in profile and the Grecian klismos chair, it appears both fashion designer and illustrator were inspired by Hope's drawings of elegant ladies and gentlemen in classical interiors engraved by Henry Moses (Fig. 2.26).

Despite his success as a connoisseur, collector and patron of the arts who had a defining impact on Regency taste, Thomas Hope never managed to obtain the peerage he so desired. While his wife was on the periphery of the aristocracy—she was the niece of the 1st Marquess of Waterford and granddaughter of the 1st Earl of Tyrone—Hope was the

[123] For the commissioning of the drawings, and the 1823 commemorative edition with nine additional plates by Henry Moses, see Watkin, *Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical Idea*, pp.218-9; Hope, *Modern Costume*, p.1; Arbiter Elegantiarum, 'Fashions for Ladies', pp.355-6 and pl.41

[124] Arbiter Elegantiarum, 'Fashions for Ladies', pp.355-6 and pl.41

exceptionally wealthy grandson of a Dutch banker.[125] In Holland, a visiting French peer described the Hope family in 1786 as 'the millionaires of Amsterdam', who used their wealth in a way unthinkable in England, that is, to make 'an aristocracy, as it were, of commerce in itself'.[126] In 1795 Hope moved to England with ambitions of using his erudition and wealth to reach the top of English society, but he struggled to assimilate successfully.[127] He was an eccentric '*deus ex machina'* with 'a finger in every artistic pie', but he had an abrasive manner and was hampered by tactless behaviour.[128] As one diarist reported, he unwisely offered the Duke of Wellington 'a gift of 10,000£' in exchange for honours.[129]

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[125] Louisa Beresford was the daughter of William de la Poer Beresford, third son of Marcus Beresford, 1st Earl of Tyrone and Catherine Poer, 1st Baroness de la Poer; younger brother of George de la Poer Beresford, 1st Marquess of Waterford, an Irish Peer, styled 2nd Earl of Tyrone, who was created Baron Tyrone in the Peerage of Great Britain in 1786, elevated to Marquess in 1789; Hope's Grandfather, also Thomas, was called 'the great banker Hope' and founded Hope & Company, a large Dutch banking group in Amsterdam in 1720.

[126] Auguste François Fauveau Frénilly, *Recollections of Baron de Frénilly: Peer of France (1768–1828)* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1909), p.31; Watkins, *Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical Idea*, p.1

[127] The Hope family moved from Scotland to Holland in the seventeenth century. Thomas Hope (1704–79) and his brothers founded Hope & Co. in 1720; Watkins, *Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical Idea*, p.1

[128] *Deus ex machina:* A power, event, person, or thing that comes in the nick of time to solve a difficulty; Watkins, *Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical Idea*, pp.1-29

[129] *The Journal of Mrs Arbuthnot*, ed. by Duke of Wellington & F. Bamford, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1950), I, p.222, n.2; There were two more attempts, by Louisa Hope, to secure her husband a peerage, firstly, through her cousin (and future husband) Lord Beresford, and

Like many of the mercantile class who had acquired great wealth and a good education, the absence of a title or noble familial pedigree required the construction of a pedigree. Commissioning family portraiture and creating a 'gallery of worthies' to display pedigree were visual strategies employed by both the noble and those who wished to be perceived as such.[130] Watkins has pointed out that Hope was 'especially fond' of commissioning portraits of both himself and his family 'since it enabled him to combine patronage with self-perpetuation'.[131] It is surely not a coincidence that he commissioned the portrait of his wife in the same year Dawe painted her father, William de la Poer Beresford, archbishop of Tuam, who had just been raised to the Irish peerage and styled Baron Decries (Fig. 2.27).

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second, by direct correspondence with the Prime Minster in which she offers the political support of her eldest son, 'one of the richest commoners of the kingdom.' See Watkins, *Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical Idea,* pp.25-6

[130] The phrase 'gallery of worthies' (which became common in the nineteenth century) alludes to the famous 'Temple of British Worthies', designed for the gardens of Stowe House, in Buckinghamshire, by William Kent (1734–5) in which a series of marble portrait busts of esteemed historic and contemporary figures were set within the arched niches of a classical style exedra in Stowe's Elysian Fields. See George Clarke, 'Grecian Taste and Gothic Virtue: Lord Cobham's gardening programme and its iconography', *Apollo: The international magazine of arts*, 136 (June 1973), pp.566-71

[131] Watkin, *Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical*, pp.41-2

Mrs Hope's portrait should be read as an extension of her husband's desire to create a distinct and distinguishing pedigree of aesthetic taste, which can be traced back like a genealogy: through the Rehberg drawings of Emma Hamilton's Attitudes; Kauffman's portrait *Lady Hamilton as the Comic Muse Thalia*; Tischbein's renderings of Grecian vase paintings; and untimately, to Callimachus's *Aphrodite*.

For George Dawe, Hope's aesthetic pedigree did not end with his portrait of Louisa Hope, although the purity of Hope's classical order would begin to be eroded by the whims of fashion. Dawe's portrait of Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold in their box at Covent Garden, from which William Thomas Fry produced an engraving in 1817 (Fig. 2.28), still maintains Hope's purity of line and the interweaving of classical Grecian and Indian design. The date of the original painting (location unknown) is unclear. A note in a Holland family Dinner Book records that Princess Charlotte 'made her first appearance in public on February 22, 1812, at the Opera, after dining at Carlton House', a reference to Giles Holland Fox-Strangways, 6th Earl of Ilchester, takes to suggest that Dawe's original painting was commissioned to record her first public

appearance.[132] This is unlikely; Dawe's original sketch (Fig. 2.29) includes Prince Leopold, who is not mentioned in newspaper accounts of the Opera visit and to whom the Princess was only engaged in 1816.[133] It is probable that the painting was instead commissioned to mark this occasion.

From Fry's engraving it is evident that the simplicity and clarity of Hope's Regency aesthetic has been maintained. The setting has been rendered in more detail than in the original sketch, showing the neoclassical decorative scheme of the refurbished theatre, which opened in 1809 after its predecessor burnt down the previous year (Fig. 2.30). The theatre box is framed by a frieze at the base, decorated with a row of floriated roundels flanked by two pilasters adorned with lion heads and fern motifs. The scheme is very similar to that used on the mantelpiece in the engraving by Henry Moses for Hope's *Designs of Modern Costume*

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[132] The 'Dinner Books' are a series of manuscript volumes which date, unbroken, from May 1799 to 1875, which not only note the names of guests at Holland House, but also include rough notes on journeys undertaken, family events and more; Giles Stephen Holland Fox-Strangways, 6th Earl of Ilchester, *The Home of the Hollands, 1605–1820* (London: John Murray, 1937), pp.166, 328

[133] 'Monday's Post', *Worcester Journal* (27 February 1812), p.3; For biographical details see Judith Schneid Lewis, 'Charlotte Augusta, Princess [Princess Charlotte Augusta of Wales] (1796–1817)', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 23 September 2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/5160>

(1812) (Fig. 2.26). On each side of the theatre box thin fluted columns with palm capitals support a projecting canopy with antefixes decorated with palmettes.

The Princess is a picture of the English rose with her pale skin and naturally flushed cheeks as she leans forward gently touching the arm of her handsome beau. Prince Leopold, who points at the Opera programme, highlighting his erudition, looks lovingly at his future wife. The Princess wears a white *chiton*-style gown and poses with the classical *anakalypteria* gesture of the bride unveiled by touching the shawl on her shoulder with the same grace as is shown in the illustrated 'Evening Dress' in the *Repository* (Fig. 2.25). In her hair, a white floral wreath recalls the Three Graces and emphasises the Princess's virtue. The Indian Cashmere shawl, with its brilliant red madder ground and large elongated *butas* in gold, green and blue, is superbly rendered draped over the edge of the theatre box.

* * *

Looking back at his father's work in 1861, Thomas Hope's son, Alexander Beresford Hope, was very careful to distinguish his style as distinctly 'English' rather than French. 'It was the experiment of a man of genius,' he argued, 'and not to be confounded with the contemporary and parallel, but far more insipid, "Empire" epoch of French art.'[134] This distinction is important since the most intense period of the Greek revival spanned the same years as the Napoleonic Wars (1798–1815). Napoleon's romantic Imperial vision of neoclassicism looked to Rome to supply the symbols of power for his French empire.[135] By rendering Italy difficult to access the French inadvertently increased the appeal of Greece for British travellers on the Grand Tour and, therefore, helped advance the Greek revival in Britain.[136] That is not to say the influences were neatly divided between France and Britain, or any other European nation: the cross-fertilisation of Greco-Roman ideas permeated the whole continent. The differences and similarities between Grecian and Roman aesthetics

[134] Alexander J.B. Beresford Hope, *The English Cathedral of the 19th Century*, (London: John Murray, 1861), pp.63-4, quoted in Watkins, *Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical Idea*, p.213

[135] Odile Nouvel-Kammerer, *Symbols of Power: Napoleon and the Art of the Empire Style, 1800–1815* (New York: Abrams, 2007)

[136] Watkins, *Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical Idea*, pp.xx-xxi

are extremely subtle, and in order to assert Grecian superiority Hope was obliged to point out in *Costume of the Ancients:*

> the Greeks by degrees became the artists, the manufacturers, the arbitri elegantiarum and the fashion-mongers of the Romans; the costume of the one insensibly confounds itself with that of the other; and, if we except the toga, and a few more of the earliest national dresses of the Romans, all the remainder of the articles of Roman attire, can only be considered as the Grecian dresses of the same era.[137]

It is therefore unsurprising that French and English fashions depicted in paintings complicate assertions by some writers that the white muslin Grecian-style dress exemplified the 'natural looks' of an Englishwoman as intended in Dawe's painting of the royal couple in the theatre box. A commentator called Butler, writing for the *Examiner* in September 1814, describes the Englishwoman's nature as 'her fine, unsophisticated complexion, her truly feminine manners, the rise and fall of her shape at liberty, and the domestic affectionate heart beneath it all'.[138] These attributes are compared with Frenchwomen who, the writer harshly argues, require excessive dress to 'conceal the face' or 'substitute

[137] Hope, Costume of the Ancients, p.13
[138] Butler, 'French Fashion', *Examiner* (4 Sept 1814), pp.572-4

the attractions of colour and drapery for those of figure and flesh'.[139] Nonetheless, no amount of anti-French sentiment can change the fact that many paintings by masters of French neoclassicism who portrayed women in white muslin 'empire' dresses, usually accessorised with an Indian Cashmere shawl.[140] Despite Napoleon's aggression across Europe over the Regency period, the French blockades and increased anti-French sentiment in Britain, French fashions were still in vogue for some women, particularly among the British aristocracy.[141] Although beyond the scope of this thesis, it is imperative that the cross-fertilisation of fashion between France and Britain, and particularly the French impact on the desirability and consumption of the Cashmere shawl from the beginning of the nineteenth century, is acknowledged.[142]

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[139] Ibid

[140] For example Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, *Portrait of Madame Panckoucke* (1811), Musée du Louvre; *Madame Rivière* (1806), Musée du Louvre; Antoine-Jean Gros, *Josephine, Empress of France,* (c.1808), Musee d'Art et d'Histoire, Palais Massena, Nice. By 1800 'cashmere fever' had hit France spurred on by Empress Jósephine's obsession with the garment, see Susan Hiner, 'Lust For Luxe: "Cashmere Fever" in Nineteenth-Century France', *The Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 5:1 (Spring/Summer 2005)

[141] For a discussion on the affect of the French Revolution on English dress see Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress*, pp.108-13; for examples of tension between the English and French regarding dress after 1815, see pp.125-126

[142] Ames, *The Kashmir Shawl and Its Indo-French Influence*; Lévi-Strauss, *The Cashmere Shawl*

Over the course of the next decade, and particularly after hostilities with France ended in 1815, the white muslin dresses and Grecian style propagated by Thomas Hope were usurped by the ephemeral nature of fashion and the need for novelty. Four years after Dawe painted Mrs Hope, he produced another, substantially larger portrait of Princess Charlotte of Wales, this time full-length (Fig. 2.31). It was probably commissioned to mark the marriage of the heiress presumptive and Prince Leopold. The painting is modelled almost entirely on Dawe's 1812 portrait of Louisa Hope (Fig. 2.2). A comparison between the large final painting, which resides in the Belgian Royal Collection, and an oil sketch in the British Royal Collection reveals some of the visual options Dawe explored (Fig. 2.32), such as the extension of the background to include a billowing red velvet drapery on the left-hand side of the picture plane to inject what historian Anne Hollander calls 'romantic or aristocratic rhetoric' into the picture.[143] Dawe has experimented with wrought iron for the parapet behind the figure and the pedestal at the end of the balustrade, yet returned to classical Grecian urn and stone parapet in the

[143] Anne Hollander, 'The Fabric of Vision: The Role of Drapery in Art', *The Georgia Review,* 29:2 (Summer 1975), p.436

final painting. The Princess's black velvet dress, which maintains the high-girdled waist, is embellished with Renaissance sleeves and a high, van Dyck-style collar. Where Mrs Hope's arm is raised in the full *Venus Genetrix* pose, the Princess has lowered hers, but still holds the *anakalypteria* gesture of lifting her shawl at her shoulder.[144] Where Mrs Hope's shawl is rendered in subdued ochre, blending into the architectural stone structures around her, Princess Charlotte's shawl is bright vermilion with gold embroidered thread, large *pallas* filled with *butas*, and tendril motifs extending beyond the *pallas* toward the centre of the shawl. It appears to be the same shawl as that worn in her Covent Garden theatre portrait. The richness of the shawl, severity of the black van Dyck-style dress and billowing drapery have moved the image away from Thomas Hope's clean and ordered aesthetic toward a more sumptuous, aristocratic tone. The painting reflects the changing fashion trends occurring over the second decade of the nineteenth century, which the commentator Butler abhorred for what he saw as the French corrupting the natural English gentlewoman.

[144] Merker, 'The Sanctuary of Demeter and Kore', pp.149, 174

Butler's polemic in the *Examiner* expressed particular horror at these embellishments and believed it was cause for great national concern, that all the 'aukward [*sic*], gaudy, and slatternly visitations' that some English 'countrywomen have chosen to adopt' from the French were obscuring the 'natural' character of the Englishwoman, her taste, manners and domesticity, in other words, her respectability.[145]

* * *

The aim of this chapter has been to demonstrate how the creation of an aesthetic pedigree in the Regency period, formed from the intersection of the classical Greek revival, British Indology and the notion of taste, provided the conditions for the assimilation of the Indian Cashmere shawl into the cultural milieu of Britain. The shawl was metaphorically transformed from a theatrical fancy dress costume and object of exotic mutability in the masquerade culture of the mid-eighteenth century to an object which was not only highly fashionable but was visually embedded into the aesthetics of taste and respectability in Britain.

[145] Butler, 'French Fashion', pp.572-4

Antiquarians like Hamilton and Hope actively produced this pedigree of taste through their intellectual and artistic interests in ancient cultures, their desire to formulate a national standard of taste to improve British art, and on a personal level, their need to portray a respectable social status for their families. In different ways, they both lacked a respectable line of kinship and therefore needed to show their pedigree through taste. Both Hamilton and Hope relied on the beauty and talent of their wives to propagate and display their philosophical and aesthetic notions of taste: Emma Hamilton as a muse and performance artist, and Louisa Hope as a social hostess at the Duchess Street mansion, and model for Hope's catalogues of costume that became the *vade mecum* of respectable women in the Regency period. These women participated in the formation of a national pedigree of taste, and therefore the construction of respectability, as prize *objects d'art* in their husbands' collections of antiquity.[146]

By all accounts, Emma Hamilton possessed a combination of attributes that positioned her at the kernel of Regency taste. She

[146] Bermingham, 'The Aesthetics of Ignorance', p.14

'ennobled' historical art and exhibited 'all the feelings of nature' by perpetuating a 'canon of beauty' that stretched back to the time of Alexander the Great.[147] But like the theatrical mask of tragi-comedy she holds in Kauffman's painting, her Cashmere shawls only transformed her character temporarily. In upper-class circles, Emma Hamilton the person and Emma Hamilton as muse were often harshly divided. When she was mantled in the Indian Cashmere shawl, posed in the attitude of a mythical muse, she was highly respected for her talent, taste, elegance and grace, but her lack of familial distinction or gentility of manner meant she was never truly accepted by patricians. The Comtesse Boigne noted that when Lady Hamilton 'exchanged her classical tunic for ordinary dress she lost all distinction'.[148] Lord Bristol reportedly remarked, 'take her as anything but Mrs Hart and she is a superior being—as herself she is always vulgar', and Lady Stuart complained that she was 'coarse' in society with 'uninteresting conversation'.[149] Yet among her peers she was deeply respected for her talent, her charm and

[147] Hayley, *The Life of George Romney,* pp119-20; Hanni, *Dictionary of Artists' Models,* p.269
[148] Boigne, *Mémoires,* p.101
[149] Frederick Augustus Hervey, 4th Earl of Bristol, quoted in Stuart, *Dearest Bess*, p.59

her beauty; she was the *divine lady* as Romney called her. Despite the ambiguity over her social acceptance, what Lady Hamilton achieved was to tame the exotic luxury of the Cashmere shawl by presenting it within the classical canon as an object of enlightened taste; she was the vehicle of its transformation from theatrical costume to desirable garment. Taste placed limits on ostentatious luxury, in the same way the shawl would contain the coarseness of the Lady Hamilton.

By the next generation, the Cashmere shawl would be transformed into a modern costume, as worn by Louisa Hope in George Dawe's portrait of a contemporary woman of standing, taste and respectability. Her husband's efforts to draw inspiration from the pedigree the Hamiltons had already begun cultivating, and to move it forward into the modern world, cemented the shawl's significance as a symbol of taste and respectability within a national aesthetic that defined Englishwomen as natural, well-mannered and domestic, the very traits that would formulate the nineteenth-century notion of respectability.

By the second decade of the nineteenth century even Thomas Hope could not hold back the ephemeral nature of fashion. The much-admired Princess Charlotte, who, like Empress Josephine in France, had a passion

for Indian Cashmere shawls, embraced the new trends, which flowed into Britain from France at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Her example ensured that the aristocracy would embrace the Indian shawl as a symbol of the highest status for the next three decades. A year after producing the Covent Garden theatre portrait, Dawe would paint another portrait of the Princess (Fig. 2.33), preceded by a series of studies in half- and full-length (Fig. 2.34), in which the Princess shows off an azure blue silk gown, made in the Russian *sarafan* style with gold scalloped lace, which is in the Historic Royal Palaces collection.[150] The sketch and an engraving by Robert Cooper of the full-length version (Fig. 2.35), shows the original embroidered white chemise, has been altered and embellished by Dawe in the half-length painting to a more elaborate puffed lace, slashed sleeve with pearl fastenings. The Princess sits in a Regency-styled interior with a portfolio of drawings under one arm and the other extended as she reaches out to touch her black Indian Cashmere shawl, which is draped loosely over the chaise longue on which the Princess sits. The correlation between art and the shawl is unmistakable in her gesture. But unlike the

[150] Aileen Ribeiro, *Clothing Art: Visual Culture and Fashion 1600–1914* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), p.79

Covent Garden Theatre portrait, where the shawl is incorporated into an aesthetic of balance and order, here the shawl is drawn into an expression of opulent magnificence which is only available to the noble.

All this magnificence would have a profound effect on Hope's aesthetic. It is not that the classical motifs disappeared, but that they were embellished, as the *Examiner*'s exasperated contributor Butler complained, with 'all flounces and furbelows,—the head-dresses so many fantastic exaggerations of pokes, hoods, and chimnies', an image certainly realised on the fashion pages of magazines (Fig. 2.36).[151] And yet, among all these displays of fantastic exaggeration, as the whims of fashion moved further away from the classical ideal, the Indian Cashmere shawl—as fashion plates from the *Repository* over the next decade show—remains the one constant object of taste (Fig. 2.37).

By the middle of the nineteenth century, as the next chapter will demonstrate, the Indian Cashmere shawl had completed the process of appropriation, assimilation and, finally, transformation, to become the most sought-after mantle for British women. While the aristocracy

[151] Butler, 'French Fashion', pp.572-4

continued to dominate visual 'ownership' of the shawl over the first half of the century, with social hierarchies being radically transformed by political reform, industrialisation and global material consumption, the middle classes began to assert their power and express their morality.[152] With its associations with taste, gentility and respectability, the Indian Cashmere shawl began to generate multiple symbolic meanings. This symbolic pluralism will be examined to understand how the shawl was used in portraits to negotiate respectability and status.

[152] For an in-depth discussion on how social transformations affected social ambiguity, see McCahill, 'Peerage Creations, pp.259–84; Cannadine. *Aspects of Aristocracy*, esp. ch.1

CHAPTER 3

Symbolic pluralism: divergent strategies in mid-Victorian self-fashioning

In September 1829 the *World of Fashion and Continental Feuilletons*, a London-based monthly publication dedicated to 'High Life Fashionables' who enjoyed 'Fashions, Polite Literature, Fine Arts, The Operas, [and] Theatres', claimed that the eye would feel wonder at 'seeing on the sofa of some sumptuous boudoir' a new style of whalebone hat 'beside of an Indian Cashemire shawl and a veil of English lace'.[1] As concluded in the previous chapter, the Indian shawl, which had been emphatically

[1] 'New Parisian Fashions from the most Authentic Sources', *World of Fashion and Continental Feuilletons*, 6:64 (September 1829), p.203

assimilated into Thomas Hope's classical, *chiton*-inspired aesthetic for modern costumes in the early years of the century, was now considered equally tasteful when paired with ostentatious hats typically adorned with a puffed crown and brimmed with a multitude of silk frills and gathered tucks.[2] Just as significant is how the magazine situates the shawl exclusively within the social sphere of high society, whether in London or the countryside:

> The 'World of Fashion' in the country differs materially from that in London; the same luxury, however, is found in the various apartments of the spacious mansions belonging to our nobility and gentry, during their summer recess; and on the ottoman in the boudoir, is carelessly thrown the costly and valuable shawl from the valley of Cashemire.[3]

The Indian Cashmere shawl was no longer, as Chapter 1 revealed, an exotic foreign object worn by the likes of the mid-eighteenth century *arriviste* Captain John Foote to masquerade in upper-class circles (Fig. 1.1). It was also no longer the theatrical object discussed in Chapter 2 and used by the lowborn Emma Hamilton to transform herself into a

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[2] V&A Collections, 'Bonnet, c.1820', Museum No.: T.202-1960, <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O357642/bonnet-unknown/> accessed 28 August 2018

[3] 'Newest London Fashions, for September, 1829', *World of Fashion and Continental Feuilletons*, 6:64 (September 1829), p.202

vision of classical taste with her Attitudes in the 1790s (Fig. 2.12). With the Indian shawl having been enthusiastically patronised by Princess Charlotte Augusta of Wales in the second decade of the nineteenth century (Fig. 2.28), it was embraced by the nobility and the landed gentry and integrated into their sartorial codes of status display. As a meaningful object, it was used to compete for social recognition, rank and respect in both domestic settings and genteel public spaces such as promenading at Rotten Row, Hyde Park.[4] The *World of Fashion* reinforces the shawl's enduring significance in this regard when reporting on the new promenade and carriage dresses in March 1836, declaring that once again the 'cloak and cashmere reign unrivalled in Hyde-park'.[5] Fashion plates, such as one published in the *Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion, Music and Romance* in December 1845, again include the Indian Cashmere shawl with their promenade dresses (Fig. 3.1). And sixteen years later, the writer Harriet Martineau confirms that the shawl still holds its symbolic power

[4] Deborah Epstein Nord, *Walking the Victorian Streets: Women Representation, and the City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), p.117

[5] 'Newest London Fashions for March 1836', *World of Fashion and Continental Feuilletons* 13:144 (March 1836), p.59

of display, describing it in *Household Words* in August 1852 as the 'pet article of dress […] to hang on ladies' shoulders in Hyde Park'.[6]

The Indian shawl had reached what the anthropologist Hans Peter Hahn describes as the final phase of cultural appropriation.[7] It had been transformed into an autonomous object that was integrated into a local context and collectively possessed; it embodied specific local meanings and local ownership.[8] As a collectively possessed object, the shawl's enduring efficacy as a status symbol was due to its association with the notion of respectability. Unlike previous studies, which present respectability as a singular, class-based notion, this chapter argues that it was determined by multiple and at times conflicting conditions. It is clear, that in portraits from the first half of the nineteenth century the shawl predominantly symbolised the respectable English gentlewoman, based on her conditions of gentility and especially distinguished by her well-bred bloodline. Increasingly, however, respectability was

[6] Martineau, 'Shawls', *Household Words*, p.552
[7] Hahn, 'Global Goods and the Process of Appropriation', p.222
[8] Ibid

recognised to be a notion with multiple, coexisting conditions centred on moral behaviour.

As this chapter demonstrates, for some women familial pedigree was still their main condition of respectability, while for others it might be the display of their domestic virtue and contemporary taste. As a pictorial sign, the shawl was therefore an object of symbolic pluralism which communicated the conditions of respectability in combination with particular visual strategies rather than as a singular object. The chapter will outline the main themes on which genteel or noble respectability was visually constructed in the portraiture that dominated the first half of the century. Thereafter, the aesthetic and contextual histories of two portraits from the mid-nineteenth century will be examined in detail to reveal different artistic responses to the shawl's semiotic plurality; and how women from different backgrounds used the shawl strategically to define and display the specific conditions of their respectability.

* * *

Portraits of upper-class women wearing the Indian Cashmere shawl primarily feature two distinct modes: the image of motherhood as a display of familial progeniture, and the display of familial pedigree through the context of the country house and estate. Family pedigree was the aristocracy's most potent construct of power and influence, and thus both of these modes position the family as an interconnected network of distinction which seeks to show continuity between the past and the future.[9] Within these visual strategies the Indian Cashmere shawl functions as an object that signals taste and refinement, and most importantly it is a symbol of the wearer's moral integrity.

In *A Mother with her Two Children* (c.1815–20) (Fig. 3.2), Alfred Chalon uses the shawl to conflate refinement and morality with the perpetuation of family distinction. This is achieved through the positioning of the shawl, which weaves in and out of the bodies of the three figures across the composition, connecting the siblings on each side of their mother through the continuation of its distinct, cypress-style *buta* motif in viridian green and contrasting vermilion. A similar design on a fragment

[9] Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy,* p.1

in the TAPI collection reveals how the *buta* is made up of tiny geometrical shapes, yet still maintains the curvature of the *buta* shape, thus echoing the curvilinear lines of the plush red Regency chaise longue on which the family sits (Fig. 3.3). The effect is one of motion across the canvas.

The mother, who is centrally placed between her two daughters, represents the nucleus of the family. The youngest, giggling and rosy-cheeked, still in the bloom of childhood, leans dependently into her mother, the full length of her body enclosed within the woman's Cashmere shawl, thus binding them into a pastiche of the Madonna and Child. The mother's gaze, however, is turned proudly toward her eldest daughter, who stands by her side looking directly out to the viewer. It is through the immediacy of this gaze that the viewer is invited to consider the family's pedigree and taste.[10] Dressed in a white, Grecian-style muslin, the eldest daughter is on the cusp of womanhood; she is still wearing her protective coral necklace like her little sister, yet her shoes are black like her mother's, foretelling her step over the threshold into

[10] It is tempting to read the commissioning of the painting as an exercise in familial promotion in the competitive aristocratic marriage market; however it is worth noting that at only 350 x 400 mm the painting is not a large showpiece but rather an intimate family portrait

adulthood.[11] Similarly, in anticipation of her future departure to start her own family, she stands within her mother's embrace but excluded from the protective folds of the shawl. Instead, the shawl is draped over her arm allowing the pattern to be displayed, thus emulating a typical pose of a gentlewoman as depicted in contemporary fashion plates (Fig. 3.4).

Chalon's painting emphasises the role of *mother* as a definitive aspect of respectable femininity, the central figure who not only produces pedigreed offspring but nurtures and protects future generations. Although the woman is represented as a real woman, not an allegorical or mythological figure, the overtones of the Madonna theme nonetheless elevate the image of the respectable mother, who sits at the centre of the respectable family, to the nucleus of a moral and pious society.[12]

The theme of the Madonna and Child is also clearly established through the composition of Thomas Lawrence's portrait *Lydia Elizabeth Hoare, Lady Acland with her Two Sons, Thomas later 11th Bt and Arthur* (*c*.1814–15) (Fig. 3.5). The mother, Lady Acland, is the wife of Sir Thomas

[11] In the early modern period coral was believed to ward off evil. For more on the significance of coral in childhood images see Pointon, *Brilliant Effects*, pp.127-36

[12] Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map*, pp.156, 169

Dyke Acland, 10th Baronet of Killerton, who came from a long-established Devonshire family with extensive properties and political power.[13] As in the Chalon painting, the mother is positioned in the centre of the group, while protectively holding her youngest son. He in turn reaches out to touch his elder brother in the same manner that the extended arm of John the Baptist draws attention to Jesus in Raphael's *Aldobrandini Madonna* (*c.*1509–10) (Fig. 3.6). Lawrence has inverted the triangular composition used by Raphael, placing the eldest son at the apex of the picture, thus signifying his future position as head of the family. Art historian Michael Levey has suggested that compositionally the eldest child is a 'wistful figure' who 'does not succeed in being fully integrated into the group' and that he 'looks something of an irrelevance' because his mother has 'fixed her attention fondly and exclusively on her younger son'.[14] Levey's reading is contested here, for Mary does not look at, or even touch, Jesus in Raphael's *Aldobrandini Madonna*, instead

[13] *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1790–1820*, ed. by R.G. Thorne, 5 vols (London: Haynes Publishing, 1986), <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1790-1820/member/acland-sir-thomas-dyke-1787-1871> accessed 10 August 2018; W. P. Courtney, 'Acland, Sir Thomas Dyke, tenth baronet (1787–1871), politician and philanthropist', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, September 2004), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/66>

[14] Michael Levey, *Sir Thomas Lawrence* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), p.205

looking at John the Baptist and protectively holding his clothing. Her gaze could certainly not be read as casting Jesus as irrelevant. Furthermore, the 'wistful' or rather reflective look on the Acland child's face may have more to do with the weight of future responsibility than with regret or rejection. Compositionally, the eldest child is not only visually attached to his mother, his body forming an extension upwards from hers, but the line of his bent leg is repeated in the bend of her arm, his head is balanced at the bottom of the picture by the hat she holds in her hand, and the yellow ground of the shawl frames his body on the right while providing a base on which his younger brother stands.

In both Lawrence's and Chalon's paintings the Indian Cashmere shawl is the unifying object that holds the family together. It represents what historian Woodruff Smith calls the 'moral competence' and the 'moral respectability' of the unit.[15] These qualities, he argues, along with 'the self-respecting self', are 'the principle criterion for judging structures of social relations'.[16] In the painting, the moral competence and self-respect of the mother, as the nucleus of the family, radiate out to her

[15] Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map,* p.159
[16] Ibid

children through a series of compositional devices; the *contrapposto* turn of the woman's body, her gaze toward her youngest child, and his extended arm toward his brother all lead the eye in a spiral outwards from the mother to the elder boy.

The respectable family as a model for society, Smith argues, was fundamental to nineteenth-century notions of 'advancing humanity'.[17] As the future head of the family, the eldest son would be responsible for his family's respectability and the moral competence of the community he would come to serve as a leading social and political figure.[18] The respectable mother is thus an instrument for the achievement of higher aims rather than a figure of veneration confined to the limits of her own family within the so-called 'cult of domesticity'.[19] That is not to say that domesticity should be dismissed, as all of the paintings discussed in this chapter are intrinsically associated with the home. The characteristics that gave rise to the notion of a domestic sphere as a meaningful space in

[17] Ibid

[18] A.F. Pollard, 'Acland, Sir Thomas Dyke, eleventh baronet (1809–1898), politician and educational reformer', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 23 September 2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/67>

[19] Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map*, p.184 n.1. For a critique on the 'cult of domesticity', see Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History', *Historical Journal*, 36:2 (June 1993), pp.383–414

which women were defined still holds relevance for understanding how morality was theoretically or ideologically constructed in the nineteenth century.[20] The paintings discussed here for the most part represent an ideal image of the respectable self; they are not accounts of women's everyday lives. What Smith is proposing is that morality defined within the domestic space had implications for public discourse and shaped many of the social reforms which occurred during that period, such as the provisions for a 'respectable education', or the anti-slavery and temperance movements, in which the model of respectable motherhood was used to provide an example and to generate empathy on a humanitarian level.[21]

If the notion of respectability encompassed these broader humanitarian terms, then in portraits the shawl could signal the humanity of women, regardless of whether they were actual mothers, but particularly if they performed morally driven acts of public respectability.

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[20] Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres?' pp.400-1

[21] Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map,* pp.156-87; Vickery argues that women who were active in the public realm often 'deployed' the separate sphere rhetoric to 'justify their non-domestic activities' and to 'legitimize their actions', see Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres?' p.400; For an example, see Anne Stott, *Hannah More: The First Victorian* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp.321-2

An example is Henry William Pickersgill's portrait *Hannah More* (1821), which was commissioned 'by the most affectionate tyranny' of her 'ardent friend, Sir Thomas Acland', no doubt to commemorate the seventy-six-year-old's humanitarian achievements (Fig. 3.7).[22] Sir Thomas Acland was a devout, even zealous churchman and, through his wife's family, met and befriended members of the Clapham Sect, including Hannah More and the abolitionist William Wilberforce.[23] More is pictured in a domestic setting but, unlike Acland's wife, not as a mother but as a moral reformist and writer. In her hand she holds her spectacles case, and on the side table, next to the inkwell and quill pen, is a letter addressed to William Wilberforce. Her moral competence and respectability is signalled in the saffron Indian Cashmere shawl around her shoulders and read in combination with the reference to her humanitarian work with Wilberforce.

It is significant that More's humanitarian work is represented as part of the visual strategy in Pickersgill's painting, as she was neither a

[22] 'From Mrs H. More to Sir W.W. Pepys, Barley Wood, Oct. 15, 1821', *Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of Mrs Hannah More*, ed. by W. Roberts, 2 vols (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1835), II, p.338

[23] *The History of Parliament*, ed. by R.G. Thorne

mother nor an aristocrat with a country estate to illustrate her status through hereditary pedigree. This contrasts with Lawrence's portrait *Lady Eleanor Wigram* (*c*.1815–16) (Fig. 3.8), in which the subject's extensive educational reforms and charity work are not explicitly displayed if at all. Lady Wigram was best known as 'Lady Bountiful' for her welfare provision and her 'pioneering role' in education in Walthamstow, yet is represented in the domestic space of the country house, which defines her condition of respectability in terms of pedigree rather than her achievements.[24] It is clear that the emphasis of familial pedigree still held greater social influence for the upper classes than humanitarian contributions to society.

Framed from above by sumptuous red drapery, Lady Wigram sits on a sofa with a pastoral landscape visible through a large open window in the tradition of van Dyck's *Lady Dorothy Percy, Countess of Leicester* (1632–41) (Fig. 3.9). Her dress style, which illustrates the departure in contemporary fashion from Thomas Hope's classical ideal, consists of a

[24] Mary Clare Martin, 'Wigram [née Watts], Eleanor, Lady Wigram (1767–1841), philanthropist', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 3 January 2008), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/55217>

black velvet dress accessorised with a white *collerette*, a Grecian 'mob' cap on her head, an ermine cloak draped over the arm of the sofa, and enfolding her body a saffron Indian Cashmere shawl with a magnificent harlequin pattern.[25] The *collerette* ruff of cotton or lace signals the revival of romantic historical costumes prevalent in contemporary fashion in the second decade of the nineteenth century.[26] The shawl design is also contemporary, with its richly decorated *pallus* filled with a row of large *millefleur butas* on panels woven in different colour warp threads. An example of this type of shawl design is found in the TAPI collection dated from around 1820 (Fig. 3.10).[27] Textile historian Monique Lévi-Strauss argues that the 'harlequin' pattern was the height of fashion in the mid-1820s and suggests that French weavers first designed the style after the jacquard loom was introduced in 1818, subsequently exporting the pattern to India.[28] The date of Lawrence's painting, however, suggests that Indian weavers were already producing 'harlequin' patterns on the handloom for the British market in 1815.

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[25] Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress,* p.126
[26] Ibid, p.123
[27] *Kashmir Shawls: The Tapi Collection,* ed. by Cohen, pp.44, 138
[28] Lévi-Strauss, *The Cashmere Shawl*, pp.28-9

Lady Wigram's husband, Sir Robert Wigram, a very wealthy and successful merchant and shipbuilder, had been connected in numerous ways with India throughout his career, not least through his direct involvement with the building and management of the East India Docks at Blackwall.[29] Lady Wigram's shawl may very well have been the first of its kind to arrive in Britain, as a gift to celebrate Sir Robert's election to the board of the East India Docks Company the same year the painting was commissioned.[30] Lady Wigram's respectability is therefore constructed from a combination of conditions: her contemporary taste signalled by her style of dress; her husband's success and ingenuity in matters concerning Indian trade; and her aristocratic pedigree, signalled by the country house setting. And if we read the shawl's association with respectability in its broader humanitarian context and study the biography of the sitter, then even 'Lady Bountiful' could be said to be implicit in the image.

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[29] 'The East India Docks: Historical development', *Survey of London: Volumes 43 and 44, Poplar, Blackwall and Isle of Dogs*, ed. by Hermione Hobhouse (London: London County Council, 1994), pp.575-82

[30] Anne Pimlott Baker, 'Wigram, Sir Robert, first baronet (1744–1830), merchant and shipbuilder', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 23 September 2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/58560>

The most direct associations between the great country house and familial pedigree are often exterior settings with architectural parapets, classical columns, marble Grecian urns and a view of the pastoral landscape beyond. These have a long pictorial heritage, which stretches back to the seventeenth century. Portraits such as *Anne (Killigrew) Kirke* (*c*.1637) by van Dyck (Fig. 3.11), as well as the serialised portraits by Peter Lely known as the 'Windsor Beauties' (*c*.1660s) (Fig. 3.12) and Godfrey Kneller's 'Hampton Beauties' (*c*.1690s), present noble femininity within 'arcadian environments'.[31] They are the predecessors of the grand manner style, given currency by Reynolds in the eighteenth century with his full-length female portraits, which art historian Mark Hallett calls the 'Pall Mall Pastorals' (Fig. 3.13).[32] They portray women within one of two interrelated environments, 'either terrace-like spaces that are marked by the architectural and material attributes of the great country house or palace' or walking in the pastoral setting of the landscaped gardens or parks of their estate, which typify 'the rhythm of aristocratic life'.[33] The

[31] Hallett, *Reynolds: Portraiture in Action,* pp.253-83
[32] Ibid
[33] Ibid, esp. pp.253, 269

landscape signals the subject's elite status while the classical references convey their sophistication and their cultivation of taste. In the nineteenth century, artists used the country house mode to express the pedigree of their subjects. Instead of the generic classical drapery favoured by Reynolds, they used the Indian Cashmere shawl to convey cultivation and respectability.

James Rannie Swinton's portrait *The 2nd Lady de Tabley with her Small Daughter* (c.1840), combines the themes of motherhood, familial pedigree and progeniture with the country estate (Fig. 3.14).[34] 'Nina' Catherine-Barbara de Salis, Lady de Tabley, stands in a terrace space holding her little daughter's hand, while leaning on a parapet with a classical column behind her. Green drapery frames the scene from the top and left of the picture and a view of a pastoral landscape can be seen in the distance behind the daughter. Her Indian Cashmere shawl is beautifully displayed over her right shoulder, its patterned folds draped down the parapet. On her left-hand side, the shawl falls along the line of

[34] The Public Catalogue Foundation have given a 'probable date' of c.1830, however, Swinton only started producing society portraits from the late 1830s, and furthermore, Lady de Tabley's first daughter, Hon. Catharine Leicester Warren, was only born in 1838, see L. H. Cust, 'Swinton, James Rannie, (1816–88)', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26849>

her arm leading to her child. The girl reaches up holding her mother's hand. While the shawl does not enfold the daughter, her foot, which is encased in a coral shoe like that of the youngest child in Chalon's painting, is placed on top of the shawl, which has cascaded onto the floor. The shawl thus extends the mother's physical attachment to the child all the way to the ground, suggesting they are both profoundly attached to the land on which they stand.[35]

This artistic lineage, and particularly the scheme within a terrace-like space, is also used in Francis Grant's portrait of the art patron and needlework author Lady Marian Margaret Egerton, Viscountess Alford (Fig. 3.15). Like Lady de Tabley, Lady Alford is portrayed on the terrace of a country estate with an Indian Cashmere shawl draped over the stone parapet on which her arm rests. In the middle ground are two classical columns and in the background a landscape of dark trees and a brooding sky. The shawl's bright red ground and ornamental pattern of green and saffron *butas* contrasts vibrantly with the dark monotones of the dress

[35] Most likely Tabley House in Cheshire, see Albert Nicholson, 'Leicester, John Fleming, first Baron de Tabley (1762–1827), art patron.' *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/16369>

and backdrop, drawing out the colour in her cheeks—a slightly 'rough and red complexion' Benjamin Disraeli claimed—and the colour of the rose held in her left hand.[36] Painted in 1841, the year she married John Hume Cust Egerton, Viscount Alford, and heir to John Cust, 1st Earl Brownlow, the portrait was most likely commissioned to celebrate this advantageous match.[37]

In all the portraits discussed so far in this chapter the shawl functions as more than a luxury fashion accessory. Its materiality offered painters the qualities of classical drapery, which was synonymous with dignity and elegance and was not prone to the ephemeral whims of fashion—a point clearly demonstrated by the paintings just discussed, which span from 1815 to 1841.[38] Semiotically, the shawl facilitates the display of particular conditions of respectability prevalent among aristocratic women in the first half of the nineteenth century: the centrality of motherhood and the moral duties of aristocratic women

[36] Robert Blake, *Disraeli* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1966), p.411

[37] Virginia Surtees, 'Egerton [née Compton], Marianne Margaret, Viscountess Alford [known as Lady Marian Alford] (1817–1888), art patron and writer on needlework', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/342>

[38] Alfrey, 'The Social Background to the Shawl', p.24

toward the continuation of familial pedigree.[39] It also suggests the more metaphorical application of motherhood, as the civilising force of humanity. The shawl does not only signal domestic, localised respectability, but also the moral competence of the wider community.

From around the 1830s, the political, social and economic changes that had their roots in industrial mechanisation, increasing urbanisation, the emancipation of slaves and Catholics, the rise of evangelical Anglicans and the shift to the economics of free trade, created both definitive and subtle changes in society.[40] If by the 1850s, as the *Ladies' Companion* insists, the shawl was the surest 'test' of an English gentlewoman's taste and respectability, then the most pressing question is what constitutes a *respectable English gentlewoman* by this date?[41] Over the course of the century, and particularly from the 1830s, a gentlewoman was less and less likely to be defined by a genteel and pedigreed bloodline, and increasingly likely to display principles of moral conduct

[39] Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy*, p.1

[40] For a concise summary of Britain's economic position over the Victorian period, which intersected with social and political change, see Francois Çrouzet, *The Victorian Economy* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), pp.1-15

[41] 'Chapters On Dress', *Ladies' Companion*, p.204

described as 'respectability'.[42] Smith argues that morality rather than class had always been a condition of respectability from its early formation as a notion of social standing in the late eighteenth century:

> [T]here was essentially nothing in generic descriptions of respectability that limited it to particular social categories. One of the most notable characteristics of respectability, and part of its enormous appeal, was that almost anyone (perhaps outside the ranks of the extremely poor) could adopt respectable patterns of behaviour and respectable attitudes and thus be respectable—and could legitimately demand that other people acknowledge that fact.[43]

Certainly, this chapter has been arguing that morality is a central condition of respectability in the paintings discussed. Nonetheless, they also demonstrate that among the aristocracy, familial pedigree was still the most potent condition of their exclusivity as a group and as a ruling class; it was their most advantageous weapon against the interloping middle classes who attempted to put forward an image of pedigree without the heritage to back it up.[44] A prime example often quoted is found in Charlotte Brontë's 1853 novel *Villette*, in which a rough Irish

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[42] Smith, *Consumption and Respectability*, p.196

[43] Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map,* p.72, see also pp.156-188

[44] Smith does not negate other forms of hierarchy, but argues that morality is 'laid across' these status definitions, see Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map,* p.72

washerwoman called Mrs Sweeney masquerades as an English gentlewoman in a respectable Belgian household by wearing '*un veritable cashemire*'.[45] The narrator, Lucy Snowe, a verifiable English gentlewoman who has fallen on hard times, is the only one in the household who recognises that the 'spell by which [Mrs Sweeney] struck a certain awe through the household' by wearing her majestic shawl is a complete deception.[46]

Using this example, textile historian Penelope Alfrey argues that the Indian Cashmere shawl's enduring reputation and signifying efficacy was gained through its power to *bestow* respectability onto its wearer, 'a power', she writes, 'that could override other, conflicting, evidence of status'.[47] Alfrey suggests, therefore, that the shawl acts as the transformative agent through which respectability is overwhelmingly transferred regardless of the wearer's true nature or moral condition. What Alfrey does not make explicit is that this transformation is temporary, in much the same way that Emma Hamilton's shawls, in the

[45] Brontë, *Villette*, I, p.97; This passage has been quoted in a number of studies on the Cashmere shawl, see especially Alfrey, 'The Social Background to the Shawl', p.23; Daly, *The Empire Inside*, pp.14–5

[46] Brontë, *Villette*, I, p.97

[47] Alfrey, 'The Social Background to the Shawl', p.23

previous chapter, transformed her from a 'coarse [and] vulgar' woman to a 'superior being' only while performing her Attitudes.[48] Within a social context, any evidence that conflicts with a subject's claim to respectability could easily be exposed by their behaviour, as it is in Mrs Sweeney's case in *Villette* and Lady Hamilton's when socialising with her husband's diplomatic and aristocratic guests.[49] In portraiture, however, a display of respectability framed as familial pedigree remains visually intact for posterity. Only through archival research is the true nature or conflicting evidence of a subject's condition revealed.

A good example is Abraham Solomon's *Anne Capper* (1846) (Fig. 3.16), a half-length pastiche of eighteenth-century portraits like Reynolds's *Anne, Viscountess Townsend* (1779–80) (Fig. 3.17) and *Portrait of a Woman (possibly Lady Frances Warren)* (c.1758–9) (Fig. 3.18). The title of the portrait tells us that Anne Capper is not a woman of rank, yet the artist has used the same pictorial language as Swinton and Grant with their portraits of Lady de Tabley and Lady Alford, respectively. Capper stands on the terrace of a country estate leaning on an architectural parapet or

[48] Frederick Augustus Hervey, 4th Earl of Bristol, quoted in Stuart, *Dearest Bess*, p.59
[49] Brontë, *Villette*, I, p.97; Boigne, *Mémoires,* p.101; Hervey quoted in Stuart, *Dearest Bess*, p.59

pedestal, which has been draped with an ivory Cashmere shawl displaying its red and blue *buta* pattern. Behind her is a low Italianate balustrade, and beyond a pastoral landscape. All the signs in the painting tell us she must belong to the landed gentry or aristocracy.

Anne Capper of Camberwell, as records tell us, was in fact from the middling ranks of London society, the daughter of John Capper, a linen draper, and wife of John Hardcastle, a grocer in the city of London, whom she married in 1850 at the age of thirty-three.[50] The 1851 Census records her visiting her parents at 1 Old Terrace, Hackney, where the linen draper lived with his wife Mary, an assistant and three servants, suggesting Capper's business was doing pretty well.[51] Hackney had urbanised quickly since the beginning of the century and the area around Old Terrace had been developed for the middle classes.[52] Capper's neighbours living on Old Terrace that same year included a Dutch

[50] Non-Parochial Birth Marriage and Death Indexes (BMDs),1581-1970, RG6/Piece 802/Folio 92, <https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/search/master/?type=research#full_record_717626628> accessed 23 May 2017; NA: Birth Marriage and Death Indexes, Civil Registration Marriages 1837-2005, III, p.208; NA: 1851 Census Returns England: GROS/PRO HO107-1503-Folio 225

[51] The number of servants per household gives only a speculative understanding of class and wealth, see Edward Higgs, *Domestic Servants and Households in Rochdale 1851–1871* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), pp.215-9

[52] *The London Encyclopaedia,* ed. by Ben Weinreb and Christopher Hibbert (London: Macmillan, 1983), pp.360, 833

merchant, an actuary and secretary of Sun Life Office, and a seventy-nine-year-old 'Fund Holder' with six servants.[53] Capper may therefore have commissioned this aspirational portrait of his attractive but unmarried daughter in order to promote the family's success, boost their reputation among their more affluent neighbours, secure a suitably beneficial match for his daughter or even to advertise his linen business.

The material quality of Anne Capper's shawl is difficult to ascertain without documentation; however, as a linen draper her father had wholesale access to both new and second-hand Indian Cashmere shawls. The shawl may also be a locally produced imitation Cashmere and may even have been selected by the artist from a costume box in his studio. The shawl certainly looks very similar to a printed Paisley shawl Solomon used in his well-known diptych *Waiting for the Verdict* (1857) (Fig. 5.2) and *Not Guilty!* (1859) (Fig. 5.3). The imitation shawl industry raised fierce debates regarding the issue of authenticity and virtue, which, along with Solomon's diptych, are discussed in Chapter 5 of this thesis. For the purposes of this chapter, it suffices to say that Solomon's *Anne Capper*

[53] NA: GROS/PRO HO107-1503-Folio 225

emulates the visual strategy of the land-owning aristocracy in an aspirant—some might say dishonest—attempt to display status and respectability.

This type of emulation ultimately reduced the shawl's efficacy as a symbol of rank and familial pedigree, and the number of portraits of aristocratic women wearing the garment began to wane in the 1840s as luxury objects of taste, such as the Indian Cashmere shawl, became affordable for the wealthy industrial elite and rising middle classes. With drops in the price of genuine Indian shawls due to increased importation, the burgeoning trade in second-hand shawls and the production of cheaper shawls woven and printed 'in imitation of the Indian' by both the French and the local British weaving industries, the aristocracy could no longer preserve the Cashmere shawl as a sign of their exclusive status.[54] Martineau confirms this with her aphorism in 1852 when she writes,

[54] For the movement of second-hand Indian Cashmere shawls through magazine and classified advertisements in the mid-nineteenth century in Britain, see Chaudhuri 'Shawls, Jewelry, Curry, and Rice', pp.231-46; The impact of imitation shawls which reached their zenith in Britain between 1840 and 1870, is discussed in Part Two of this thesis

'from the Queen down to the pauper, is the shawl the symbol of woman's taste and condition [*sic*]'.[55]

The two case studies that follow discuss paintings produced less than a decade apart and during this time of incredible social change. They both drew on aspects of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century portrait conventions, yet they clearly capture very different conditions of respectability. The lives of the women portrayed are investigated in detail, in order to get to the heart of their social and moral condition and therefore their respectability. The paintings demonstrate the diversity of the visual strategies of self-fashioning, which incorporated the Indian Cashmere shawl as a sign of respectability, used by women from very different backgrounds and circumstances.

* * *

For Louisa Thynne, the 3rd Countess of Harewood, pedigree display in the form of a gallery of worthies, boasting illustrious ancestors and great personages from the past, was *de rigueur*. She was the daughter of

[55] Martineau, 'Shawls', p.553

Thomas Thynne, 2nd Marquess of Bath, and the Hon. Isabella Byng, daughter of the 4th Viscount Torrington. At her childhood home, Longleat, the family seat in Wiltshire, she had grown up with a magnificent display of familial pedigree, including portraits by Lawrence, Reynolds, Lely, van Dyck and even Hans Holbein's 1545 portrait of Henry VIII, King of England, who had a direct connection with the family through his third wife, Jane Seymour.[56] Records show that Lady Harewood's paternal ancestors were elevated to the peerage in the early Elizabethan period, and her mother's in the early eighteenth century.[57] Her pedigree was therefore well established, demonstrably noble and for the most part extremely respectable.[58]

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[56] *Biographical Catalogue of the Portraits at Longleat in the County of Wiltz: The Seat of the Marquis of Bath,* ed. by Mary Louisa Boyle (London: Elliot Stock, 1881)

[57] Henry Lancaster, 'Thomas Thynne' (bap. 1640, d. 1714): *ODNB*, (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Oct 2009), <doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/ 27424>; John B. Hattendorf, 'George Byng (1663–1733)': *ODNB*, (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Oct 2009), <doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/4262>

[58] H. M. Scott, 'Thynne, Thomas, (1734–1796)', *ODNB*, (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2005), <doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/27425>; The family were, for the most part respectable except for a short period when the gambling losses of the 3rd Viscount Weymonth (later 1st Marquess of Bath) were the talk of the court

The same could not be said for the family of her husband, Henry Lascelles, 3rd Earl of Harewood (1797–1857), whom she married in 1823.[59] Despite nineteenth-century efforts by the House of Harewood and genealogists to promote the Lascelles as a family of 'ancient standing and respectability', neither their titular heritage nor their morality can be definitively proved.[60] With the very foundations of Harewood House, the family's seat in West Yorkshire, built on the proceeds of financial fraud, and their reputation plagued by a string of social scandals and political upsets, Lady Harewood's own good pedigree and the reputation of her family were severely undermined. This would suggest one of the main

[59] Dates of birth and death have been inserted for the male members of the Lascelles family due to the recurrence of the names 'Henry' and 'Edward' across the generations. For simplicity first names have been avoided where appropriate for clarity.

[60] Despite his claims that he traced the family name to a Norman commander and gentleman who fought at the Battle of Hastings in 1066, the genealogist John Jones is unable to make any direct link between the lineage of the most distinguished Lascelles and that of the Lascelles of Sowerby and Brackenburgh, a bloodline with no peerage (albeit still landowners), from whom, he writes 'it is generally admitted that the present noble family of Harewood is descended', see John Jones, *History and Antiquities of Harewood, in the County of York, with Topographical Notices of its Parish & Neighbourhood* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Leeds: Buckton, 1859), pp. i, 280-6, for lack of link see p.284-5, 284 n.* and p.287 n.1; Earlier genealogists also described the Lascelles as a family 'of ancient standing and respectability' or describe their 'long line of highly respectable ancestors' without clarification, see Arthur Collins and Sir Egerton Brydges, *Collins's Peerage of England: Genealogical, Biographical, and Historical*, IX vols. (London, 1812), p. 508 and John Burke, *A General and Heraldic Dictionary of the Peerage and Baronetage of the British Empire*, 2nd edn (London : H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1832), p.579. For the family's lack of refinement see Simon D. Smith, *Slavery, Family, and Gentry Capitalism in the British Atlantic: The World of the Lascelles, 1648–1834,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp.11–2

motivations for commissioning George Richmond in 1855 to produce the portrait *Lady Louisa Thynne, 3rd Countess of Harewood* to hang in the state dining room at Harewood House alongside portraits of her husband and his ancestors (Fig. 3.19).[61] As will be demonstrated, the commission was part of a systematic attempt to assert the family's genealogical nobility and recast their pedigree in a respectable mode in line with modern Victorian values of duty and morality.[62] What is revealed is that Lady Harewood's own personality, abilities and physical presence are the most effective assets she has in fashioning the family's moral competence.

According to his diary, Richmond arrived in Yorkshire on 13 September 1855 to 'paint a whole length portrait of Lady Harewood' standing on the terrace at Harewood House. [63] Edwin Lascelles (1713–95), cousin of her husband's grandfather, had built the original 'princely Corinthian edifice' between 1759 and 1771, on the back of a fortune amassed by his father, 'Old Henry Lascelles' (1690–1753), a Barbadian customs collector, landowner, merchant and slave trader. Old Henry's

[61] The Earl's portrait, *Henry Lascelles, 3rd Earl of Harewood* by Francis Grant was presented to the sitter on 18 January 1848 by members of the Bramham Moor Hunt

[62] Peter Mandler, *The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 21–96; Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy,* pp.9–36.

[63] George Richmond, 'Daily Remembrancer', 1885, RAA: GRI/2/11

record as the collector of customs between 1714 and 1730 reveals fraud and corruption on a massive scale, aided by his half-brother Edward Lascelles (1702–1747), who was the father of the 1st Earl of Harewood.[64] Both men were subsequently charged with embezzlement and publically exposed in a report written for a special commission of the Inspector General of Customs in 1745.[65] Nonetheless, as historian Simon D. Smith notes, by this stage they had the financial means and political clout to evade punishment, if not public humiliation.[66]

While his father practiced his unsavoury business, Edwin Lascelles had been educated in the style of a gentleman. After inheriting Old Henry's fortune, he fashioned his new home at Harewood using the *crème de la crème* of British design. Architects John Carr and Robert Adam, furniture designer Thomas Chippendale and garden designer Sir Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, together created a Palladian mansion and estate fit for a nobleman (Fig. 3.20).

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[64] S.D. Smith, *Slavery, Family, and Gentry Capitalism,* pp. 59-62; Old Henry's fortune would pass to Edward Lascelles's descendents.

[65] S.D. Smith, *An Introduction to the Lascelles & Maxwell Letter Books (1739–1769)* (Wakefield: Microform Academic Publishers, 2003), p. 22 n.38 & n.40; S.D. Smith, 'Lascelles, Henry (bap. 1690, d. 1753)', *ODNB*, (Oxford University Press, Jan 2008), <doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/63019>

[66] S.D. Smith, *Slavery, Family, and Gentry Capitalism,* pp.59-62

In 1770 Edwin improved his social standing further when he married Lady Jane Fleming, the granddaughter of the Duke of Somerset, a widow who chose to retain her late husband's title rather than be demoted to plain old Mrs Lascelles.[67] Coveting an elevation to the peerage, and in true aspirational style, the couple commissioned full-length portraits to adorn the walls of their home from notable artists such as Reynolds, Romney, Gainsborough, Lawrence and Grant.

Reynolds produced no fewer than eight portraits for Harewood, including two of Lady Fleming's beautiful daughters, *Jane, Countess of Harrington* (1775) (Fig. 3.21), and *Dorothy Seymour, Lady Worsley* (1779) (Fig. 3.22).[68] Lady Harrington offered the Lascelles the ideal figure to represent their rising status and respectability. She was a woman of beauty and charm who was known as a 'paragon of virtue' with excellent domestic talents, and she kept illustrious company in Queen Charlotte's inner

[67] What Edwin Lascelles coveted most was a peerage, and for this he needed 'the expert touch of a sophisticated chatelaine to make both his home and his ambitions come to life', see Hallie Rubenhold, *The Scandalous Lady W: An Eighteenth-Century Tale of Sex, Scandal and Divorce* (London: Vintage, 2008), pp.18-20

[68] Mannings, *Sir Joshua Reynolds,* pp. 233-4, 299, 482-3; For a catalogue of the Harewood collection, see Tancred Borenius and Henry George Charles Lascelles, Earl of Harewood, *Catalogue of the Pictures and Drawings at Harewood House and elsewhere in the collection of the Earl of Harewood* (Oxford: University Press, 1936)

circle as one of her Ladies of the Bedchamber.[69] Lady Worsley, by contrast, was a wilful and rebellious young woman who brought shame on the family in 1782 with one of the most notorious and salacious divorce cases to appear before the courts in London, which exposed her and her husband as thoroughly immoral.[70] This scandal would come back to haunt Lady Harewood half a century later when in 1839 a series of unsavoury events, an elopement and a careless marriage ended in banishment and disinheritance for her husband's older brother, the heir of Harewood.[71] Thus, the way was left open for Henry Lascelles to succeed his father as 3rd Earl of Harewood.[72] At the time, the *Satirist, or The Censor of the Times* invoked cruel associations between Edward Lascelles's immorality and the Lady Worsley scandal, making sure the

[69] 'Jane Fleming, later Countess of Harrington', *The Huntington Library*, <http://emuseum.huntington.org/people/3312/jane-fleming-later-countess-of-harrington> accessed 31 May 2017; Karen Lynch, 'Some Lascelles Ladies', *Maids & Mistresses: Celebrating 300 years of Women and the Yorkshire Country House,* ed. by Ruth M. Larsen (York: The Yorkshire Country House Partnership, 2004), p.55

[70] Sir Richard Worsley sued a young captain in his regiment for criminal conversation with his wife. The case not only revealed Lady Worsley's extramarital love life, but also exposed her husband's penchant for voyeurism and his complicity in her affairs, see Rubenhold, *The Scandalous Lady W*

[71] Edward Viscount Lascelles married the prostitute Ann Elizabeth Rosser of Hereford in 1818, see Kirsten McKenzie, *A Swindler's Progress: Nobles and Convicts in the Age of Liberty* (Cambridge, MA & London: Harvard University Press, 2010), p.121

[72] Also Henry Lascelles (1767–1841), 2nd Earl of Harewood

family's historical vices were not forgotten.[73] In a direct attack on Lady Harewood and her husband, the *Satirist* accused Henry Lascelles of being 'yoked to one of the aspiring daughters of the Marquis of Bath' and 'panting for succession to the Peerage' over his estranged brother.[74]

The theme of 'panting for succession' followed the Lascelles through the generations. The family's initial elevation to the lower rungs of the peerage in 1790–1 had only been extant for two decades when, during the embittered 1806–7 local election campaign in West Riding, Yorkshire, they were dubbed 'a family of nobodys'.[75] Just as Sir Walter Elliot in Jane Austen's *Persuasion* (1817) showed 'pity and contempt' for the 'endless creations of the last century', so Lord Milton of the enobled Wentworth-Fitzwilliam family saw his opponent Lascelles as an upstart.[76]

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[73] 'It has long been known', *Satirist, or The Censor of the Times*, (24 January 1836), p.27; The publication mistakenly make references to the notorious reputation of Countess Harrington, when they mean her sister, Lady Worsley

[74] 'It has long been known', *Satirist,* p.27

[75] Edwin Lascelles (1713–95) was elevated in 1790, five years before his death without issue, which rendered the barony extinct. The family fortune passed to his cousin Edward (1740-1820), grandfather of Henry Lascelles, 3rd Earl of Harewood, who was styled 1st Baron Harewood the following year, see Jones, *The History and Antiquities of Harewood,* pp. 280-301, 294 n.2; Edward Baines, *A Collection of the speeches, Addresses, and Squibs produced by all Parties during the Late Contested Election for the County of York* (Leeds: 1807), pp.39-40

[76] Between the 1780s and the 1830s the peerage, as an organising system, saw unprecedented growth and codification with an annual average increased of ninety per cent, and almost an eighty per cent increase in the number of peers in the House of Lords. Edwin Lascelles elevation had coincided with the most intense period of creation, see

Sensitivity to rank was not the only issue facing the family during those elections. Lascelles stood on a platform alongside the anti-slavery hero William Wilberforce in the same year that 'An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade' was passed in parliament.[77] Back in the eighteenth century Old Henry and his half brother Edward had sold loans to colonial planters, which were hedged against plantation mortgages. With many foreclosures during the credit crisis of 1772–3 and the American Revolutionary War (1776–83), the Lascelles seized plantations, including any 'moveable goods' like slaves.[78] By the end of the eighteenth century—at the very time the abolitionist movement was born[79]—the family controlled a substantial holding of all West Indian interests, with around 27,000 acres of land and nearly 3,000 slaves added to their portfolio

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McCahill, 'Peerage Creations', pp.261-2; Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy*, pp. 29-36; Jane Austen, *Persuassion,* 1st publ. 1817 (Toronto: Harper Perennial Classics, 2014), Google ebook, accessed 5 June 2016

[77] PA: HL/PO/PU/1/1807/47G3s1n60

[78] S.D. Smith provides the most comprehensive account of the Lascelles family business and trade dealing, see S.D. Smith, *Slavery, Family, and Gentry Capitalism*, pp.149, 182-90; S.D. Smith, *Lascelles & Maxwell Letter Books,* p.7; Christopher J. D. Ingledew, *The History and Antiquities of North Allerton, in the County of York* (London: Bell & Daldy, 1858), p. 314

[79] In 1772 William Murray, 1st Earl of Mansfield, a Lord Chief Justice, ruled that English Law did not recognise the state of slavery, see Edmund Heward, *Lord Mansfield: A Biography of William Murray 1st Earl of Mansfield 1705–1793 Lord Chief Justice for 32 years*. (Chichester: Barry Rose, 1979), pp.139-40

between 1777 and 1788 alone.[80] It is not surprising that the *Leeds Mercury* was incredulous that the 'pious' 'Saint', Mr Wilberforce, that great abolitionist, could possibly share the political stage with such a 'profane sinner' as Henry Lascelles.[81]

With this turbulent history behind them and 'gratifying tributes' paid to the couple in the *Leeds Intelligencer*, the 3rd Earl and Countess moved into Harewood House in 1844.[82] Lord Harewood would, however, continue to provoke derision, and in 1849 Lady Harewood found her family under attack once more.[83] Lord Harewood's cousin, Revd Hale, the minister at Harewood church, who found the Earl 'arrogant and overbearing', was charged and convicted for 'irreverent and unseemly conduct in the pulpit' against the Lascelles family, after calling two of the Earl and Countess's sons 'tawdry-laced, jacketed jackanapes and

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[80] Smith, *Slavery, Family, and Gentry Capitalism* pp.177-78; For information on the legacy of the Lascelles's plantation and slave ownership, see 'Henry Lascelles, 2nd Earl of Harewood', *Legacies of British Slave-ownership database*, <http://wwwdepts-live.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/6180> accessed 16 September 2018

[81] *Leeds Mercury,* 23 May 1807 reproduced in Baines, *A Collection of the Speeches,* pp. 39-40; The ownship of slaves was not outlawed until 1833, but the *Leeds Mercury* editorial reflects the British public's changing attitude toward the morality of owning or trading human beings.

[82] Henry Lascelles succeeded his father in 1841

[83] 'Gratifying Tributes to the Earl and Countess of Harewood,' *Leeds Intelligencer*, 5 October 1844, p.8

popinjays'.[84] Despite his conviction, the public showed great sympathy toward the minister, with the *York Herald* blaming the high church, the wealthy and the powerful for driving Revd Hale to insanity.[85] This incident might have served as the final clarion call for Lady Harewood to shift the focus on the family away from the crime, scandals and immorality associated with the name of Lascelles and to recast them as noble and respectable.

George Richmond was not Lady Harewood's first choice of painter in this quest. A letter dated 18 June 1855 to the estate steward, William Maughan, reveals her aspiration to engage Queen Victoria's favourite painter, Franz Winterhalter.[86] Winterhalter not only 'enchanted' the Queen, but also produced court portraits of practically every royal family in Europe, a club Lady Harewood was no doubt keen to keep company with.[87] Having 'failed in getting Winterhalter', as she complained to

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[84] 'Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Case', *Perth Gazette and Independent Journal of Politics and News* (18 May 1849), p.3; 'Some Selected Reports from The Burniston's Northern Luminary', Leeds Intelligencer (31 January 1849), p.5

[85] 'The Case of the Vicar of Harewood', *York Herald* (7 October 1848), p.7

[86] 'Letter from Lady Harewood to William Maughan', West Yorkshire Archive Services (WYAS): WYL250/Accn3292/133/4 [14/4], (18 June 1855); Barbara Coffey Bryant, 'Winterhalter, Franz Xaver (1805–1873)', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, May 2006), <doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/64287>

[87] London: Royal Archives, (RA) VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 18 December 1846 (Princess Beatrice's copies); the Queen wrote in her diary of his 1846 group portrait of the royal family that it was a

Maughan, Lady Harewood commissioned Richmond, who was well known for his powers to capture his subjects' likeness, to put them at ease and to express the 'thought' that captured their nature.[88] Richmond's artistic lineage was also important for providing the necessary aesthetic style to assert a dynastic pedigree. This lineage, which Richmond was reportedly very proud of, places him within three 'easy strides' of Reynolds, making him the ideal alternative to Winterhalter.[89]

Richmond's portrait is not immediately remarkable in the context of a country house boasting an impressive line-up of family portraits by the great British artists of the eighteenth century. Stylistically, Richmond has adopted Reynolds's grand manner in composition, pose and gesture, as well as in the obligatory representation of classical architectural details

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'*chef d'œuvre*—like a Paul Veronese, such beautiful, brilliant, fresh colouring—and we were enchanted.'

[88] A.M.W. Stirling, *The Richmond Papers from the Correspondence and Manuscripts of George Richmond, R.A., and His Son Sir William Richmond, R.A., K.C.B* (London: William Heinemann, 1926), p.53

[89] Richmond's father Thomas, a miniature painter, had been the pupil of the miniaturist George Engleheart, his first cousin, who was in turn a former pupil of Reynolds, see Susan Sloman, *Missing Pages: George Richmond R.A. 1809–1896. Drawings, Watercolours, Letters, Journals & Notebooks*, exh. cat. 31 Oct-23 Nov 2001 (London: Thos. Agnew & Sons, 2001), n.p.

with a glimpse of the pastoral landscape beyond.[90] By drawing on this revered past—particularly from a period when, as historian David Cannadine notes, the aristocracy had a 'self image of antiquity and permanence'—the painting attempts to assert a dynastic message of continuity and pedigree, as well as visually continuing the line of portraits adorning the walls of Harewood House.[91] The family and its 'sense of interconnection between the generations dead, living and yet unborn', as Cannadine argues, was 'the most fundamental unit of upper-class existence'.[92] This interconnection is visually expressed through the family estate: the house, the land, and family heirlooms like art works.[93]

Lady Harewood's desire to portray familial pedigree and progeniture was intimately connected to the portraits she lived with. Reynolds's portrait of Lady Harrington offered her a prime example of his Pall Mall pastoral, with a sitter who represented all the qualities of a

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[90] Hallett, *Joshua Reynolds,* p.260

[91] Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy*, p.10

[92] Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy*, p.1

[93] Edwin Lascelles's Will explicitly stipulated that his commissioned artworks and other valuables from Harewood House should 'continue & remain there to be used & enjoyed [...] as Heir Looms' by future generations, see 'Extract of Draft will of Edwin Lascelles', 17 Mar 1790, WYAS, Leeds, MSS Harewood WYL250/1/686

superior pedigree.[94] In the Reynolds portrait, Lady Harrington is centrally positioned but turned toward the right in a three-quarter pose. Her left arm is extended, presenting a floral wreath. In her other hand she holds her transparent girdle. In Richmond's painting, Lady Harewood's pose is reversed. She also stands centrally positioned in a three-quarter pose but her body is turned toward the left. Her right arm is extended at the same height as Lady Harrington's left arm, but instead of holding a floral wreath Lady Harewood gestures toward the parterre and the grounds beyond. In her other hand she holds her Cashmere shawl, while on her head she wears a floral wreath. An informal pairing of the two portraits illustrates the 'interconnection between the generations', as if Lady Harrington's floral wreath has been passed forward, like a family heirloom, for Lady Harewood to wear on the crown of her head (Fig. 3.23).[95] Lady Harewood in turn pays tribute to the past with her gesture back towards the estate grounds, a seventeenth- and eighteenth-century portrait convention which emphasises land

[94] Hallett, *Joshua Reynolds,* p.260

[95] There is no evidence to suggest the paintings were formally hung together or not

ownership and inheritance, as used by van Dyck in his portrait of Anne Kirke (Fig. 3.11) and in Lely's portrait of Lady Northumberland (Fig. 3.12).

Viewing Richmond's painting *in situ* at Harewood, one immediately recognises that the architectural detail in the painting is a section of the grand Italianate terrace overlooking the parterre (Fig. 3.24). These features had recently been added to the house by the eminent architect of the Houses of Parliament, Charles Barry, as part of a grand renovation plan to enlarge, modernise and aggrandise the original eighteenth-century Palladian home (Fig. 3.25).[96] Begun in 1842, the Harewood account books show Barry would take over a decade to complete the work, with his last payment received from the estate in 1855.[97] The timing suggests that Lady Harewood's portrait was commissioned as the *coup de maître* of her attempt to enhance and rejuvenate the status of the Lascelles family. By

[96] The first stone of the new Houses of Parliament were laid in 1840, two years before building begun on Harewood House. The state opening of the Houses of Parliament took place on 11 November 1852, two years before building works on Harewood House were completed, see WYAS: WYL250/4.8.63; WYL250/4.8.p; An additional floor was added to accommodate the twelve children the Earl and Countess had produced since they married in 1823. The interiors were updated to reflect contemporary taste, especially in the dining room and in Lady Harewood's sitting room

[97] WYAS: WYL250.3.Acs.530; Charles Barry was paid in instalments. He received £927 s15 d0, a 5% commission on contract work worth £18,555, and paid by the Earl's financial managers Messrs Lumley & Co., a further £505 s10 (he invoiced for £506 s8, see WYL250/3/Acs/529 'Record of payments' 1855) plus travel expenses of £146 s14, and was paid in 1855 by Mr Maughan. The total cost of contract work and Barry's commission was £36,984 s19 d0, see WYAS: WYL250.3.Acs.515

modernising the interiors and creating a new façade for Harewood House, the Countess would, like many noble families in the nineteenth century, 'recast' her familial pedigree 'in a more serious and pious mode'.[98]

Correspondence between Lady Harewood, Barry and Maughan reveals her direct and detailed involvement in the design elements of the alterations as well as her central role in managing the extensive renovation project.[99] Both the portrait and Lady Harewood's letters suggest a formidable woman of strong mind and ingenuity, who kept Barry on his toes. Others have even described her as 'ruthless'.[100] Despite the centrality of these renovations, and in particular the parterre—the *pièce de résistance* with its stately fountains, stone statues and symmetrical flowerbeds (Fig. 3.24b)—the architectural and scenic elements of the painting conform to Reynolds's 'general idea' of the classical and the generic rather than show the specific characteristics of Barry's

[98] Peter Mandler describes this recasting as an integral part of the 'Victorian idea of heritage', a deliberate construction of a national past that could be embraced by all classes as a means of avoiding the revolutionary schisms between the nobility and the people that had been seen across Europe, see Mandler, *The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home*, pp. 21-96; Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy,* pp.9-36

[99] WYAS: WYL250/Acc/3670

[100] Lynch, 'Some Lascelles Ladies', p.124

design.[101] The parterre falls mostly beyond the picture frame or merges indistinctly into the landscape beyond. Only the classical balusters can be seen clearly, forming a horizontal band that contains the Countess within the foreground space, emphasising the presence of the subject herself and her physicality.

Like the new façade of the house, the physical attributes of the Countess are contemporary: her sartorial style and accessories are new; her Indian Cashmere shawl is in the style of a mid-nineteenth-century example in the V&A textile collection (Fig. 3.26); her jewellery is designed in the fashionable archaeological style (Fig. 3.27b);[102] her hair is parted modishly in the middle. Her black velvet dress, while suggesting dignity and restraint, follows a current look of the 1850s, with a white cotton *chemisette* and bell cuffs elegantly embellished by white lace *engageantes* (Fig. 3.27b).[103] Unlike the polychromatic modelling of shadow and highlight used by Reynolds to make the heavy satin dresses of his subjects ripple

[101] Reynolds, *Discourses*, see esp. 'Discourse IV', pp.99-121 and 'Discourse VII', p.181

[102] Charlotte Gere and Judy Rudoe, *Jewellery in the Age of Queen Victoria: A Mirror to the World* (London: British Museum Press, 2010), pp.374-461

[103] *Engageantes*: Under sleeves of white cotton or lace extending out from under bell shaped pagoda' sleeves of day dresses in the mid-nineteenth century, see Robin Stemp, *Women's Costume in England, 1825–1900,* Occasional paper 1 (Lincoln: Museum of Lincolnshire Life, 1978), p.6

with movement and integrate with their setting, Richmond's application of paint on Lady Harwood's black dress is flat and opaque with the undulations of the velvet fabric barely visible, giving her form a sense of gravitas and monumentality. The impasto brushwork on the dress contrasts with the looser, more generic treatment of the landscape in the background. Aesthetically, the contrast is unsettling and has the effect of separating Lady Harewood's body from the background. The opacity and flatness is redolent of the Scottish painters Henry Raeburn and his follower James Watson Gordon, whose portrait *The Hon. Mrs Alexander Macalister* (1843), similarly creates a sense of separation between the subject and the environment in which she is portrayed (Fig. 3.28). In Richmond's painting the transformation in painting style between the landscape and the figure captures a sense of temporality—of time passing been the past and the present—that is visually connected through the form of the Indian Cashmere shawl sweeping out from the shadows behind Lady Harewood. Only the folds of the shawl enfolding her body interrupt the density of Lady Harewood's monumental form, its undulating pattern introducing movement to an otherwise static and heavy body. The influence of the Pre-Raphaelites is clearly evident in the

shawl, which is the most detailed element of the portrait with it vibrant red madder and exquisitely rendered elongated, ornamental pattern of saffron, green and indigo *butas* unfurling down the front of her dress (Fig. 3.27c).

Lady Harewood's letters to Richmond, which display a remarkable maternal intimacy and rapport between the two, confirm her enjoyment of their sessions and her approval of the visual strategy adopted for the painting.[104] Shortly before her death in 1859, she told him, 'I feel satisfied to be handed down to posterity with that soft matronly, ladylike appearance'.[105] While Lady Harewood might not look as soft as she imagines, with her severe black dress and slightly pursed lips, she was a matriarch in the true sense of the word. She ran her household with such efficiency and talent that her peers called her the 'domestic oracle'.[106] The letters between the three Howard sisters—the Lady Caroline

[104] Royal Academy of Arts archive (RAA), GRI/3/276; GRI/2/11

[105] RAA: GRI/3/276

[106] *Three Howard Sisters: Selections from the Writings of Lady Caroline Lascelles, Lady Dover and Countess Gower,1825–1833,* ed. by Maud Leconfield and John Gore (London: John Murray, 1955), p.80

Lascelles, Lady Georgiana Dover and Harriet, Countess Gower[107]—reveal a stream of advice sought from the Countess: whether the servants should cut, make and mark the house linen; how to conceal curtain bows; plans for garden beds; and the age at which Lady Harewood's children began to ride horses; even what salary increase to give a child's tutor.[108] But a noblewoman's domestic talents and duty required more than curtain bows and riding lessons; her most important aristocratic obligation or sense of *noblesse oblige* was to produce sons and heirs, a duty that can make or break the family lineage. The family bible at Harewood House contains notes of every illness Lady Harewood's children suffered, a visual reminder of the ease with which disease could rid a family of succession.[109]

The progenitive duty of a noblewoman was made explicit to Lady Harewood in the obituary written for her mother-in-law, Henrietta Seabright, the 2nd Countess of Harewood, in March 1840:

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[107] Caroline, Georgiana and Harriet Howard were daughters of George 6th Earl of Carlisle. Caroline married the Rt. Hon. William S. Lascelles, younger brother of the 3rd Earl of Harewood

[108] *Three Howard Sisters*, pp. 80, 148, 249, 278

[109] *The Holy Bilble: According to the Authorised Version,* (Cambridge: University Press, 1823), handwritten notation on front flyleaf, Harewood House library, uncatalogued. I am grateful to the staff at Harewood House for bringing the family Bible to my attention

Let sorrow drop a solitary tear,
Where worth and talent sleep in Harewood's bier.
Who in herself the virtues could combine,
That in the mother, wife and lady shine.
Just like the sacred tree of Indian woods,[110]
Nourished by spicy gales and cooling floods.
Throws out its branches which therein take root;
And from those roots anew fresh branches shoot;
Thus while we mourn our loss let praise arise,
That ere the shades of night have veiled their eyes,
The parent oaks have seen such vigorous saplings rise.[111]

The tribute is explicit that a noblewoman's worth is determined by the performance of her virtuous duty to produce 'vigorous saplings'. The immediate family grouping of parent and their offspring are compared to that very British symbol, the ancient noble oak tree. For the interconnection of the family network, however, the poem invokes the topology of the Indian banyan tree, a symbol of eternity due to its seemingly endless and expansive aerial root system which produces a complex kinetic network of interwoven 'branches' and 'trunks' that are

[110] Banian-tree (also banyan-tree; now often simply banyan) the Indian Fig Tree (Ficus religiosa or indica) with aerial rhizome root system. *OED Online*, (Oxford University Press, June 2013) <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/15222?redirectedFrom=Banyan> accessed 7 August 2013

[111] 'On the Death of the Countess of Harewood', *Leeds Intellegencer* (14 March 1840), p. 8

all connected, their perpetual expansion creating a mystical energy that inspires wonder.

The use of this sublime description of an Indian tree in the obituary of an Englishwoman is not insignificant. India had become mythologised and deeply woven into the image of British femininity since the seventeenth century through her chintzes, cottons and muslins, her spices and dyes, through her diamonds, pearls and indeed her Cashmere shawls.[112] Just as India's 'spicy gales and cooling floods' provide nourishment for the 'vigorous sapling' of the banyan tree, so the commodities of India had provided nourishment for Britain's empire, both economically and culturally.[113] By producing 'vigorous saplings' the noble family ensures that the power and wealth they had amassed through imperial expansion would be prolonged and expanded. In this

[112] For a study on how women negitiated a commodity market laden with objects of Empire, see *Women and Material Culture, 1660–1830,* ed. by Jennie Batchelor and Cora Kaplan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); de Groot, 'Metropolitan desires', pp.166-90; For the impact of Indian goods on mid-ninteenth century literature, including Indian Cashmere shawls, diamonds and tea, see Daly, *The Empire Inside*

[113] A large body of work exists on the impact on Britain of Indian goods. For recent research on how Indian goods shaped the country house in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain, see *The East India Company at Home, 1757–1857*, ed. by Margot Finn and Kate Smith (London: UCL Press, 2018); for work on Indian textiles in Britain see Rosemary Crill, 'Asia in Europe: Textiles for the West', *Encounters: The Meeting of Asia and Europe 1500-1800,* ed. by A. Jackson and A. Jaffer (London: 2004), pp.262-71; Giorgio Riello, *Cotton: The Fabric that Made the Modern World* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013)

Lady Harewood excelled. She produced thirteen children, the first five of whom were all male, thereby guaranteeing the continuation of the Lascelles pedigree, an enviable position for any titled and landed family.[114]

The role of the respectable mother, as Smith reminds us, 'is not limited to one's own physical offspring, but extended to everyone whom one could consider to be part of one's "family" broadly defined'.[115] Lady Harewood was the rock not only of her family but also of the villages surrounding the estate. Correspondence between the countess, the architect George Gilbert Scott and Maughan from 1844 to 1855 records her involvement in the building of a 'national school' and gallery at Weeton. Among other things, she organised the painting of desks for the new school, arranged the wages for the schoolmaster and payments for the architect.[116] The duties of a noblewoman were bound up in notions of a fixed class structure: she was expected to, and should be seen to, show

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[114] Lynch, 'Some Lascelles Ladies', *Maids & Mistresses*, p.59

[115] Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map,* pp.156-88

[116] Letters from Lady Harewood to William Maughan, WYAS: WYL250/sc/54 (4 June 1844); WYL250/sc/59 (8 March 1848); WYL250/sc/61 (3 January 1850); WYL250.Accn3292.113.1 [14.1], (20 January 1852); Letters from Lady Harewood to George Gilbert Scott, WYL250/sc /62, (28 August 1851); WYL250/Accn3292/133/4 [14/4] 18 June 1855

charitable benevolence and kindness toward the tenants on her husband's estate and provide for the development of their moral, social and religious behaviour. These were the conditions of her respectability. Contemporary newspaper reports attest to Lady Harewood's success in these duties, praising her as 'much beloved' for her 'good actions' and 'advancement of the tenantry'.[117] The *Aberdeen Journal* even holds her up as the model of noble behaviour, urging its readers to take note of her deeds and 'go and do likewise'.[118] In this sense Lady Harewood's moral respectability and competence extended out into the public sphere of her community.

Richmond has combined the visual tradition of Reynolds's Pall Mall pastorals with the image of the modern matriarch. The portrait makes historical references in order to legitimise Lady Harewood's aristocratic genealogies, but it breaks from those conventions in the handling of paint in the sartorial aspects, those areas concerned with Lady Harewood's present rather than her past. Unlike earlier paintings such as Lawrence's

[117] 'Death of the Dowager Countess of Harewood', *Leeds Intelligencer* (12 November 1859), p.5

[118] 'Art in the Palace', *Aberdeen Journal*, (22 November 1848), p.3

Lady Eleanor Wigram, in which the modern harlequin shawl and black dress are integrated into the overall treatment of the painting through the consistent modelling of forms across the whole canvas, in Richmond's portrait the handling of paint differs between landscape and figure. Where the landscape and parterre recall the heritage of Reynolds, the forms of the figure reflect modernity in the flatness and opacity of the black dress and its juxtaposition with the fine detail of the shawl. As art historian Louise Purbrick has argued, black, as a modern colour, maintains the gravity of its associations with death, grief and loss but is 'no longer dreadful, signifying abstinence more often than loss. […] Black becomes bourgeois moderation articulated against aristocratic sumptuary display', which carries associations with wealth and power, but also with spiritual morality.[119] Lady Harewood has taken on what the economic historian Francois Çrouzet describes as the 'bourgeois complexion' of respectable modernity against a backdrop of tradition.[120] By this, Çrouzet means that the values and aesthetics of the middle

[119] Louise Purbrick, 'The Bourgeois Body: Civic Portraiture, Public Men and the Appearance of Class Power in Manchester, 1838–50', *Gender, Civic Culture and Consumerism: Middle-Class Identity in Britain, 1800–1940*, ed. by Alan Kidd and David Nicholls (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p.93

[120] Çrouzet, *The Victorian Economy,* p.15

classes were culturally pervasive. The painting thus pulls in opposing directions by representing the past *and* the present, solidity *and* movement, continuity *and* change. The Indian Cashmere shawl acts as the bridge between these divergent visual schemes and performs a particular, integrated function of forming a connection between the opposing forces.

* * *

If the Indian Cashmere shawl signalled Lady Harewood's morality in Richmond's painting within a framework of noble pedigree assertion, then the next painting, William Holman Hunt's *The Children's Holiday: Mrs Fairbairn and Five of Her Children* (1864-5), presents the shawl as a very different symbol of respectability (Fig. 3.29). Rather than a genealogical display of pedigree, the context of Hunt's painting reveals Mrs Fairbairn's notion of respectability to be based on the conditions of moral worth, within a framework of productive domesticity, the celebration of talent and ingenuity, and the display of progressive taste.

Unlike Lady Harewood, Allison Fairbairn, *neé* Callaway, hailed from solid professional stock and had neither aristocratic pedigree to reinforce

nor a scandal-filled heritage to disguise. Her father Thomas Callaway was a successful London surgeon from Chislehurst, where he still owned a small property.[121] Callaway was an officer of the London Medical Society, member of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons, the Hunterian Medical Society and the Philanthropic Society.[122] The principles on which his respectability was shaped were intimately bound up with the values of these societies; they were professional, pro-industry, hard working and morally good. The *London Medical Repository, Monthly Journal, and Review* typically reported in 1820 on the 'accession of strength, both in point of *talent and respectability*', which the society had gained.[123] 'Every officer and every member', they continue, 'seems actuated by the *esprit de corps*, and ardour in the pursuit of science, which must necessarily constitute a sure guarantee for the society's

[121] He is recorded in the 1843 *Chislehurst Tithe Award Schedule*, as the landlord of a 'House, Coach House, Cottage Garden & Shrubberies [and a] lawn', for which he paid an annual tithe of £2 1s 32d, see *Chislehurst Tithe Award Schedule*, 15th December 1843. Kent Archaeology Society, <http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/Research/Maps/CHS/02.htm> accessed 14 may 2013

[122] James Elmes, *A Topographical Dictionary of London and Its Environs: Containing Descriptive and Critical Accounts of All the Public and Private Buildings, Offices, Docks, Squares, Streets, Lanes, Wards, Liberties, Charitable, Scholastic and Other Establishments, with Lists of Their Officers, Patrons, Incumbents of Livings, &c. in the British Metropoli,* (London: Whittaker, Treacher and Arnot, 1831), pp.29, 228, 298 and 337

[123] George Man Burrows, Anthony Todd Thomson & David Uwins, 'Medical and Physical Intelligence', *The London Medical Repository, Monthly Journal, and Review*, 13, (London: Thomas and George Underwood, 1820), p.358 [emphasis added]

increasing prosperity and usefulness'.[124] Respectability in the Callaway house was thus conflated with professional conduct, based on meritocracy, solidarity, prosperity and usefulness, rather than social entitlement.

These principles no doubt influenced Miss Callaway's choice of husband. Thomas Fairbairn, a Mancunian engineering magnate and patron of the arts, hailed from a working-class family, who reportedly 'fought their way from the lowliest rank and amidst immense difficulties' to the very top of society through their 'talents and perseverance'.[125] By the time they married in 1848, Fairbairn belonged to that social group of wealthy industrialists whose families had climbed the social ladder, not through wealth and social climbing like Edwin Lascelles, but through honest hard work and determination, with the same individualist principles of self-sufficiency, conduct and perseverance that would

[124] Burrows et al., 'Medical and Physical Intelligence', p.358

[125] *Daily News,* extracts of Fairbairn's obituary, repr. in William Pole and William Fairbairn, *The life of Sir William Fairbairn, Bart., F.R.S., LI..D., D.C.L, Partly written by himself*, ed. by William Pole (Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1877), p.435; Judith Bronkhurst, 'Fairbairn, Sir Thomas, second baronet (1823–1891)', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, 2004), <doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/62808>

be espoused by the writer Samuel Smiles in his popular book *Self-Help* in 1859.[126]

Fairbairn's father William, the son of a farmer, began work at fourteen and later founded the hugely successful Manchester-based engineering firm Fairbairn and Co., most famous for the design of the Conway and Britannia tubular bridges.[127] His contributions to engineering were recognised by the state in 1869—four years after his son commissioned *The Children's Holiday*—when he was elevated to the baronetage.[128] Reports suggest that the elder Fairbairn's acceptance of the honour had less to do with privilege and upward mobility than his desire for social consolidation.[129] Simply put, he took the accolade to promote industry. His main ambition, as he himself stated, was 'to secure a respectable independence' for his family, rather than to hobnob with

[126] London Metropolitan Archives (LMA), Saint Alfege, Greenwich, Register of marriages, P78/ALF, Item 041. Allison Callaway and Thomas Fairbairn married at the Anglican Church of St Alphege, Greenwich, on 23 March 1848; Pole, *Sir William Fairbairn,* p.434; Samuel Smiles, *Self-Help; with Illustrations of Character and Conduct* (London: John Murray, 1859), p.vi, p.x and pp.xiv-xv

[127] Bronkhurst, 'Fairbairn, Sir Thomas', <doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/62808>; James Burnley, 'Fairbairn, Sir William, first baronet (1789–1874)', rev. Robert Brown, *ODNB*, (Oxford University Press, 2004), <doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/9067>

[128] Bronkhurst, 'Fairbairn, Sir Thomas'; Fairbairn succeeded to the baronetcy in 1874 when his father died

[129] Pole, *Sir William Fairbairn,* p.341

lords and ladies.[130] Upon his death in 1874, an obituary in the *Daily News* puts the Fairbairn family's relationship with the peerage into context, especially in light of the Lascelles's scramble for honours in the previous century:

> [I]t is only to be regretted that such distinctions are not made of more genuine value by being less frequently conferred as the reward of plodding and brainless partisanship. But Sir William Fairbairn was of all men the son of his own works. If he bore a title towards the close of his life we are glad of it, rather because it affirmed that the State acknowledges the dignity of industrial science than because we think it in any way ennobled him.[131]

In 1840, after a private education, seventeen-year-old Thomas Fairbairn forwent a university degree and joined his father's engineering business.[132] To compensate, in 1841–2 he took a ten-month grand tour of Italy, where he indulged his great interest in art and classical culture. From 1848 he started buying contemporary works of art at the exhibitions of the Royal Manchester Institution where his father was a governor. William Holman Hunt's biographer Judith Bronkhurst argues,

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[130] Ibid

[131] *Daily News,* repr. in Pole, *Sir William Fairbairn,* p.435

[132] Bronkhurst, 'Fairbairn, Sir Thomas'

however, that it was seeing Hunt's work at the 1853 Royal Academy exhibition that affected 'a turning point in the development of his collection'.[133] This was the beginning of a very fruitful patronage and friendship, which would transform Fairbairn's collection into the epitome of 'mid-Victorian progressive taste'.[134] With Hunt's encouragement he embarked on a spending spree, buying contemporary artworks and commissioning more from Thomas Woolner, John Brett, Robert Braithwaite Martineau and Edward Lear. It would be nearly a decade before Fairbairn commissioned Hunt again for his wife's portrait.[135]

By the time Fairbairn commissioned *The Children's Holiday,* he and his wife had become champions of modern art and industry. He was not only the sole proprietor of his father's business and a supporter of imperial expansion and free trade, but he was also an established patron of the arts. He had served as a member of the Royal Commission for the

[133] Ibid; Oxford: Bodleian,'Hunt to Thomas Combe, 30 April1853', Ms. Eng. lett. c. 296 fols. 12, 12v; 'A Mr Fairburn called, who, having seen my pictures yesterday, came to give me an unlimited commission for some work to be undertaken at my convenience'. The commission was *The Awakening Conscience,* 1853

[134] Judith Bronkhurst, 'Fruits of a Connoisseur's Friendship: Sir Thomas Fairbairn and William Holman Hunt', *Burlington Magazine*, (October, 1983), pp.586-97

[135] In a letter to Richard Monkton Milnes, 1st Baron Houghton, dated 20 July 1864, Hunt confirms that he is 'engaged to go down to my friend Mr Fairbairn in Sussex to paint in the first week of August', see Cambridge: Trinity College Library (TCL): HOUGHTON MSS.12266. Hunt to Baron Houghton 20 July 1864

Great Exhibition of 1851; he was chairman of the committee for the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition of 1857; and he was the commissioner responsible for the fine arts department for the Industrial Exhibition of 1862.[136] Mrs Fairbairn hosted events such as 'a grand concert at her residence at Queen's-gate' in 1862, 'to which the foreign commissioners to the exhibition were invited'.[137]

For Fairbairn, collecting and supporting contemporary art established 'at once such a character of respectability'—to borrow the words of Lord Melbourne on commending Prince Albert's connoisseurship in 1840.[138] Fairbairn's own connoisseurship, and in particular his handling of the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition, earned him the praise 'that soul of the undertaking' from the *Illustrated London News* and an invitation from the Queen to be honoured with a knighthood.[139] He respectfully declined, as reported in the *Illustrated*

[136] Ibid.

[137] 'The Court', *Illustrated London News* (12 July 1862), p.31

[138] British Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne regarding Prince Albert's connoisseurship in the arts and sciences, recorded in Queen Victoria's diary: RA/W, RA VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 9 May 1840 (Princess Beatrice's copies)

[139] 'Town and Table Talk', *Illustrated London News* (12 September 1857), p.267

London News on 24 October 1857, showing his preference for an egalitarian society.[140]

In January 1860, he had launched a campaign to establish a free art gallery and museum in Manchester, funded by the wealthier citizens to 'produce a marked improvement in [the] habits, taste, and morality' of 'our dense hard-working population'.[141] He argued that the working classes would see the institution as 'a sure means of strengthening the feelings of mutual regard and dependence which, in a free and advancing country, knits the different ranks and interests of society together'.[142] He was not, therefore, interested in a homogeneous society but rather a cooperative one, free from 'the worship of Mammon' which, he claimed, 'has stifled within us those noblest aspirations of the heart—the desire to do good to others'.[143] Acutely aware of his own family's rise from poverty,

[140] 'Town and Table Talk', *Illustrated London News* (24 October 1857), p.411; Fairbairn would inherit his father's title in 1874, but in 1857 he declined the honour, see *Morning Post* (25 October 1861), p.3; Bronkhurst, 'Fairbairn, Sir Thomas'

[141] *Manchester Guardian* (25 September 1860), p.3

[142] Ibid

[143] Ibid

he reminds us 'not to be unminded of the sources from which our own comforts and prosperity have sprung'.[144]

The location of Mrs Fairbairn's portrait, which certainly represents the 'comforts and prosperity' of the family, is Burton Park, a classical-style country house in Petworth, Sussex, which Fairbairn bought in 1862.[145] Built thirty years earlier by the young R.A. Gold Medalist, Henry Bassett, the building was somewhat ostentatious with 'all kinds of ornamental tricks', like 'oversize foot-scrapers, made up of anthemion and ionic capitals'.[146] The entrance hall contained a splendid grand staircase that had been designed around 1800.[147] Hunt scholars overwhelmingly agree that, given its scale of over two metres in height, the portrait of Mrs Fairbairn would have resided at the top of this staircase. For Fairbairn, the country house offered a suitable space in which he could display his art collection, his contemporary homeware

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[144] Ibid

[145] Cambridge: Trinity College Library (TCL): HOUGHTON MSS.12266. Hunt to Baron Houghton 20 July 1864; Hunt to Tupper, 12 October 1864 and Hunt to Tupper, 11 December 1864, transcribed in *A Pre-Raphaelite Friendship: The Correspondence of William Holman Hunt and John Lucas Tupper,* ed. by Coombs et al (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1986), pp.70, 71

[146] Ian Nairn and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Sussex* (London: Penguin, 1965), pp.37, 123-4

[147] Nairn, *Sussex*, p.37

and his respectable wife and children. From the heights of the grand staircase the benefits to society of industrial progress and free trade would have been made clear to any guests entering the house by the portrait before them.

Hunt produced two preparatory drawings for the painting, which suggest that Fairbairn's brief required his wife to be pictured in a domestic setting.[148] The first drawing shows her sitting at a table pouring tea, a Russian samovar on the table and her shawl around her waist (Fig. 3.30). The second sketch, with the marginal notes 'different position / but only intelligible to me' and further down the page 'Trng to / Furtr / this' [trying to further this], indicate that Hunt had decided to move the domestic scene outside into the grounds of Burton Park, and to position Mrs Fairbairn in a standing rather than in a seated position (Fig. 3.31). In doing so, Hunt has elevated Mrs Fairbairn from a domestic setting reminiscent of a genre scene by using the same portrait conventions as Richmond used for Lady Harewood's painting. By positioning her in the

[148] Fairbairn was heavily involved with the painting's genesis, see Judith Bronkhurst, *William Holman Hunt: A Catalogue Raisonné,* 2 vols (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), I, p.201

pastoral setting of an estate, he has placed her on the same social level as a countess. By changing the position of her arms in the final painting, and moving her left hand away from the teapot where it is positioned in the second sketch, the right hand, while still holding the teapot, nonetheless evokes the convention of the noble hand gesture used in Richmond's portrait of Lady Harewood. Hunt is not attempting to emulate the aristocracy as Solomon does in his *Anne Capper* portrait, but rather to reimagine the traditional pictorial conventions of the artistic lineage used by Richmond. Where Lady Harewood gestures to her classical terrace, so Mrs Fairbairn's hand rests on the handle of a silver Victorian teapot (Fig. 3.32). Where the classical terrace represents the past, noble pedigree and cultivation, Mrs Fairbairn's teapot signals contemporary taste, industrial progress and domesticity. Bronkhurst has identified the teapot as one manufactured by the East End firm of Pearce and Burrows in 1848 (Fig. 3.33).[149] The gold, black and white china tea set with its Grecian meander pattern was also a contemporary alternative to the blue and

[149] This was the same year the Fairbairns were married, suggesting the teapot, which is still in the Fairbairn family collection, was a wedding present; Bronkhurst, 'Fruits of a Connoisseur's Friendship', pp.586–97

white chinoiserie that had been around for more than a century.[150] Unlike at Harewood House, there was no sequence of grand manner portraits to continue at Burton Park. The artistic lineage therefore plays out in a very different way in the Fairbairns' country home. Rather than a gallery of worthies, Burton Park would have been more like an exhibition space in which to pay homage to Fairbairn's patronage of contemporary art, design and manufacturing.

The preparatory drawings also reveal that, along with raising Mrs Fairbairn from a seated interior to a standing exterior space, Hunt has also raised the shawl from around her waist in the first drawing, to draped over the arm of the chair in the second, and finally to the central position of covering her shoulders and enfolding her body in the final painting. Here the shawl, a white and gold *zari*-embroidered *dorukha* shawl, is given full expression framing Mrs Fairbairn's fashionably clad body.[151] The *dorukha* style, meaning 'two face', was a technique invented for reversible shawls in the 1850s and introduced to the European market

[150] Emalee Beddoes, *The Art of Tea: Late Victorian Visual Culture and the Normalization of an International National Icon*, Unpublished Mphil thesis, University of Birmingham, (January 2014), p.13

[151] *Dorukha:* reversible shawl, see Glossary. Close examination of the painting reveals the reverse side of the shawl

the following decade, making Mrs Fairbairn's shawl contemporary.[152] According to textile historian Jeffrey Spurr, the reversible shawls also brought in a new aesthetic character, which would appear to match the style of Mrs Fairbairn's shawl: 'small-scale, elaborately branching vines sprouting tiny flowers and leaves, including little *butis*, deployed against a clearly perceptible ground' (Fig. 3.34).[153]

Where Lady Harewood's black dress had provided a foil for the Indian shawl in Richmond's painting, here it is integrated into the whole of the pictorial scheme. And where Lady Harewood's shawl loosely encircles her body, taking on the character and function of classical drapery, Mrs Fairbairn's shawl is worn tightly around her shoulders 'as an Empress wears her drapery', to borrow a description of Margaret Hale wearing her Indian shawl in Gaskell's *North and South* (1855).[154] Instead of falling softly from her left hand like Lady Harewood's shawl, Mrs

[152] *Kashmir Shawls: The Tapi Collection*, pp. 32, 60-1, 379; The reverse side is just visible on the left-hand side of Fig.3.34

[153] The *dorukha* design moved away from the shawl designs that had dominated the European market over the previous two decades with a predominance of red, and complex, overlapping intersections of elongated *buta* that cover the entire surface of the shawl, see Spurr, 'The Kashmir Shawl: Style and Markets', pp.60-1, and pp.208-32 for examples of European market shawls

[154] Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South* (Leipzig: Bernard Tauchnitz, 1855), p.58

Fairbairn pulls her shawl into her waist to avoid brushing the teacups. The effect is one of containment; the tightly pulled fabric and her lower arm acts as a girdle containing her body and her clothing within a feminine silhouette. This containment, as art historian Caroline Arscott suggests, is representative of Mrs Fairbairn's virtue.[155] She is the moral guardian of the family; like the 'angel in the house' of Coventry Patmore's 1854 poem, her 'disposition is devout, her countenance angelical'.[156]

The rest of Mrs Fairbairn's attire and accessories mark her out as a woman of moral respectability, a dignified gentlewoman who wears an elegant but appropriate silk day dress, with understated pale grey stripes and black velvet trimming. Her body is suitably corseted, her wide skirt, shaped by the modish 'princess' crinoline, which forms the base of a pyramidal composition with the focal point resting on her angelic face.[157] The bodice of her dress, buttoned neatly to the neck, is finished off with a

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[155] Caroline Arscott, 'Employer, husband, spectator: Thomas Fairbairn's commission of *The Awakening Conscience', The Capital of Culture: art, power and the nineteenth-century middle-class*, ed. by Wolff J., & Seed J. (Manchester, 1988), p.169

[156] Coventry Patmore, *The Angel in the House*, 1st publ. 1854 (George Bell and Son, London, 1885), pp.32-3. Patmore's poem describes the qualities of the ideal Victorian woman, which Patmore saw in his wife Emily.

[157] Victoria & Albert Museum, 'Dating Clothes & Photographs from the 1860s', online resources <http://www.vam.ac.uk/collections/fashion/features/dating/1860s/ index.html> accessed 11 August 2009

collar of salmon pink ribbon and demure white lace. Her contemporary jewellery was made to order in 1862 from the goldsmith and jeweller Robert Phillips of Phillips Brothers in Cockspur Street, London (Fig. 3.35).[158] Phillips was one of the most revered jewellers to work in the revivalist style, and the Fairbairn *parure* had been displayed at the 1862 International Exhibition where Phillips won a 'Prize Medal for Excellence in Design and Manufacture'.[159]

Hunt's canvas is typically Pre-Raphaelite, with luminosity of colour and a shallow depth of field, particularly in the bottom half of the canvas. Here, the shawl joins a medley of richly ornamented objects and a multitude of symbolic details, which fill the foreground picture plane or even burst out of the frame like an over-crowded market stall. As the *Illustrated London News* reported, Hunt has rendered every detail with 'concentrated attention, and with the most strenuous determination to realise it with the full resource of his art'.[160]

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[158] Bronkhurst, *William Holman Hunt*, I, p.202

[159] *The International Exhibition of 1862. The Illustrated Catalogue of the Industrial Department. British Division,* II (1862), Class XXXIII, Cat. No. 6658, p.55

[160] 'Exhibition of the Royal Academy', *Illustrated London News* (27 May 1865), p.510

As Judith Bronkhurst notes, Hunt is indebted to van Dyck's *The Five Eldest Children of Charles I* (1637), for the arrangement of the children in the foreground, the idea of the boy patting his dog, and even the Oriental carpet and still life on the tea table (Fig. 3.36).[161] Both artist and patron would have been exposed to the painting, which had been on display at the 1857 Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition of which Fairbairn was the Chairman and where Hunt's own work was on display. Bronkhurst has also noted the influence of Reynolds's 1789 outdoor family scene, *The Braddyll Family*, which includes a similar-looking spaniel, a boy standing on the right, and a chair in profile (Fig. 3.37).[162]

Again, Hunt has taken the historical references and converted them into modern domestic vignettes full of symbolic meaning. The standard eighteenth-century classical marble urn behind the boy in Reynolds's painting is recalled through Mrs Fairbairn's silver Russian samovar on the left, a comparison even more pronounced in the preparatory drawings. The message is nonetheless clear in the final painting, for the cultivation and sophistication signalled by the urn in Reynolds's

[161] Bronkhurst, *William Holman Hunt,* I, p.201
[162] Ibid

age has been replaced by the cultivation and sophistication of contemporary manufactures.

The two youngest children, positioned in front of the table in the foreground, one symbolising manufacturing by threading a rosehip necklace, the other holding out a nasturtium flower as a sign of patriotism.[163] An older boy stands beside his mother petting the family dog in a show of loyalty, while in the background two children walk towards a copse of horse chestnut trees with offerings of fruit for the deer in an act of charity.[164] These are the qualities inherent in this respectable family, showing what Smith would call the 'marriage' of gentility and virtue, which was bound up with the rituals that formalised domestic femininity, such as the serving of afternoon tea.[165]

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[163] John Ingram, *The Language of Flowers or, Flora Symbolica,* (London and New York: Frederick Warne, 1887), p.351

[164] The deer suggest Burton Park was a substantial estate. According to Bronkhurst, the preparatory sketches of the deer are on the same size and type of paper as the sketched of Mrs Fairbairn, suggesting they were drawn on the estate and not elsewhere; see Bronkhurst, *William Holman Hunt,* II, p.122; Bronkhurst 'Fruits of a Connoisseur's Friendship', p.588

[165] Smith, *Consumption and Respectability,* pp. 139-69; 171-87; For more on the social rituals around tea from the eighteenth and nineteenth century, see Ray, 'Storm in a Teacup?, pp.205-22

Mrs Fairbairn stands beside the table laid with all the accoutrement for afternoon tea.[166] Running beneath the tea table is an Oriental carpet, which solidifies the horizontal band at the base of the main compositional triangle. The carpet provides a stage on which the modern accoutrements of domesticity are displayed. Fairbairn's involvement with the international art and industrial exhibitions between 1851 and 1862 provides a context for the type of display seen on Mrs Fairbairn's tea table. These exhibitions, as historian Thomas Richards notes, transformed goods into signifying objects.[167] To borrow the words of Karl Marx, they glorified the commodities as objects with 'social character', which had a bearing on 'social relations'.[168] *The Children's Holiday* therefore serves as a type of visual inventory that reveals the conditions of the Fairbairn family's respectability and 'social relations'.

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[166] Smith argues that afternoon tea was one of the fundamental pillars of respectability in Victorian society, which allowed women to claim a standing in society more than a particular class or rank, see Smith, *Consumption and Respectability,* p.173, see also171-4

[167] Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851–1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), p.21

[168] It was Walter Benjamin who argued that, 'World exhibitions glorify the exchange value of commodities, see Walter Benjamin, *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings,* ed. by Peter Demetz, trans. by Edmund Jephcott (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), p.152; Marx went even further to describe commodities, which 'abound in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties' as fetishes which have 'social character' and perform 'social relations', see Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production,* 2 vols (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1954), I, pp.71-2

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Over the period discussed in this chapter, social hegemony began shifting away from the aristocracy and a new balance of power was established, particularly after the extension of the franchise in 1832. Social change did not, however, mean that the extreme hierarchies and enormous differences in income and living standards across society had disappeared, and as Çrouzet reminds us, many of the 'aristocratic traits' of eighteenth-century England remained intact and still defined many people.[169] These traits are clearly operating in the portraits of Lady Harewood, Lady Wigram, Lady Tabley and Lady Alford. The progress of the middle classes, however, resulted in a society that 'displayed a mainly bourgeois complexion', with the 'influence of their values' evident on both the upper and more prosperous working classes.[170] The notion of middle-class respectability, a prominent tone of the bourgeoisie, became so entrenched in our historical view of Victorian Britain that the Indian Cashmere shawl has been defined specifically as a sign of 'middle-class

[169] Çrouzet, *The Victorian Economy,* p.15
[170] Ibid

respectability' in most accounts of nineteenth-century fashion.[171] Yet, as Part One of this thesis has shown, and this chapter in particular, the genesis of respectability from the late eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century reveals a complex notion with multiple, coexisting conditions through which it could be expressed. The Indian Cashmere shawl's journey of appropriation and assimilation into the British cultural milieu was deeply entwined with this genesis, which defined respectability for British women by the conditions of their morality. The shawl's efficacy as a visual sign of respectability endured because it could be read within a visual strategy of self-fashioning across different social groups and conditions.

This chapter has raised important issues, therefore, about how objects are read in paintings. To apply a singular meaning to an object, particularly one that spans a century of great social change, risks losing the nuances of its meaning and significance. We should not read the shawl reductively as a sign of middle-class respectability and take that at face value. Arguing that the Indian Cashmere shawl simply bestows

[171] Daly, *The Empire Inside*, p.13; Maskiell, 'Consuming Kashmir', pp.38-9; Choudhury, 'Fashion and the 'Indian Mutiny'', p.826

respectability on women by overriding any conflicting evidence that suggests they may not be respectable does little to explain the diverse social status of women wearing the shawl or the social transitions they may have experienced at the time.[172] If we understand respectability as a notion based in morality rather than class and, as Woodruff Smith argues, with implications for public discourse, then the Indian shawl becomes an object of symbolic plurality which is used in multiple contexts to express the conditions of respectability pertinent to the individual but within the moral parameters of society.[173]

Richmond's portrait of Lady Harewood and Hunt's portrait of Mrs Fairbairn both use the Indian Cashmere shawl to express the individual conditions that constitute each woman's view on what makes them respectable. Their subjects and the application of their paint tell a very different story about those respectabilities: Lady Harewood is preoccupied with the retention of aristocratic pedigree and the concomitant esteem afforded her class. Mrs Fairbairn has no aristocratic pedigree to retain but constructs her respectability by displaying the

[172] Alfrey, 'The Social Background to the Shawl', p.23
[173] Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map*

social benefits of industrial progress. Rather than simply bestowing a class-based respectability, the shawl provided women with a symbol through which to negotiate their own social transformation and shape their own image.

If we are to understand the plurality of the notion of respectability and the nuances of self-fashioning in a transforming society, then we have to look at the supporting evidence of women's social conditions—that which is visible in the paint and that which is hidden in the archives. In order to construct a better understanding of how women wished to be seen in the nineteenth century, or the artistic impulses which deliver a particular vision of status, we have to draw together the multiple texts of women's lives, their conditions and their desires; we have to research how these texts intersect with the painted surface and the meaning of the objects represented. As Amanda Vickery argues:

> 'intertextuality' must be researched, not simply asserted in the abstract. Case studies are needed of the economic roles, social lives, institutional opportunities and personal preoccupations of women.[174]

[174] Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres?, p.414

Part One of this thesis has dealt exclusively with the Indian Cashmere shawl. In Part Two, the implications of the Indian Cashmere shawl's domestication, in the form of locally made shawls, either in imitation of or inspired by the Indian shawl, are explored in paintings that range from royal portraits to narrative paintings of farmers' wives and prostitutes. The imitation of the Indian shawl will be shown to complicate its semiotic meaning, raising issues of hegemony, value, authenticity, virtue and vice. Artists of British genre paintings of the mid-nineteenth century embraced the *buta*-patterned shawl to engage with, and challenge, the changing social conditions which defined femininity for women across the social classes.

PART TWO

DOMESTICATION

> In whatever mechanical or manufactured arts other nations may excel Great Britain, our artists should be upon the watch, not only to imitate, but surpass, [...] those which are imported and which they can see, handle and minutely examine.[1]

So advised Malachy Postlethwayt in his eighteenth-century *Universal Dictionary of Trade and Commerce* regarding the mechanical or manufactured arts imported by Britain from across Asia. The Indian Cashmere shawl was exactly the kind of imported foreign manufacture that outclassed locally produced textiles in the quality of its yarn, intensity of its dyes and ingenuity of its designs.[2] Owing to the returning *nabobs* and *nabobinas* discussed in Chapter 1, who brought their fortunes

[1] Malachy Postlethwayt, 'Mechanical Arts', *The Universal Dictionary of Trade and Commerce*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (London, 1757), I, n.p.

[2] For the superior material qualities of pashm yarn, see Rizvi and Ahmed, *Pashmina*, pp.22-7; for the making of the textile, pp.48-75; For the qualities of Indian dye, see Sonia Ashmore, 'Colour and Corruption: Issues in the Nineteenth Century Anglo Indian Textile Trade', *TEXT Journal,* 37 (2009–10: Thomas Wardle Centenary Special)

and their Cashmere shawls back from India, the weavers of Great Britain could 'handle' and 'examine' these fine specimens in minute detail, with the first attempts at imitation definitively recorded in 1788.[3] With the increasing demand for Indian Cashmere shawls in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, a whole new market was opened up to the local weaving industry. Above and beyond the Indian garment's superior material attributes, the demand for more affordable shawls with the distinctive *buta* pattern was also driven by its increasing association with the display of respectable femininity as an expression of moral competence rather than class over the nineteenth century.[4] The domestication of the Indian Cashmere shawl was thus an inevitable outcome of the process of its appropriation and assimilation into British

[3] *Transactions of the Society of Arts*, VII, quoted in Clabburn, *The Norwich Shawl*, pp.10-1; Victorian educational writer Louisa Barwell claims that Edward Barrow, a Norwich shawl and cotton manufacturer, reportedly 'succeeded in making a figured scarf in imitation of the Indian shawl' in 1784–5 'but it was too dear to find a sale and the manufacture was discontinued', see Louisa Mary Barwell, *A Companion to the Norwich Polytechnic Exhibition*, (Norwich, 1840), quoted in Clabburn, *The Norwich Shawl,* p.132. Textile historian C.H. Rock places the beginning of shawl weaving sporting the Indian 'pine' in Norwich and Edinburgh in the 1770s, and in 1805 in Paisley, see Rock, *Paisley Shawls,* pp.5, 9.

[4] The *buta* pattern was distinctive yet evolving, see Spurr, 'The Kashmir Shawl: Style and Markets', pp.30-65

culture, which enabled a broader section of society to access a status symbol previously only affordable to the upper classes.[5]

For the better class of weavers in Edinburgh, Norwich and Paisley, as well as their competitors in Paris and Lyon in France, domestication meant drawing inspiration from the design principles of the Indian shawl, which were then realised through new and advanced techniques that reduced both the time and cost of manufacture.[6] As historian Maxine Berg writes, this was 'a process of product innovation and invention', not through the 'direct process of copying, but by a more subtle process of "imitation"'.[7] That said, there were also unscrupulous manufacturers who indulged in blatant plagiarism in a highly competitive market, raising fierce opposition to goods perceived as 'shams'.[8] The local shawl-

[5] The theory of domestication is ordinarily used to describe the adoption of new technologies by a consuming unit, and how those technologies generate social, cultural and economic meaning. In Part Two of this thesis, domestication is used to describe the local production of an appropriated object rather than the domestication of the technologies used in its method of production; For conventional use of domestication theory see Roger Silverstone, E. Hirsch, and D. Morley, 'Information and Communication Technologies and the Moral Economy of the Household', *Consuming Technologies: Media and Information in Domestic Spaces*, ed. by Roger Silverstone (London: Routledge, 1992), pp.15-31

[6] Zutshi, 'Designed for eternity', p.424; For an account of the weaving techniques and technological developments in the Norwich 'imitation' line, see Rachel Chaple, 'Weaving Techniques', Clabburn, *Norwich Shawl,* pp.42-44

[7] Maxine Berg, 'In Pursuit of Luxury: Global History and British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century', Past and Present, 182 (2004), pp.126

[8] 'Shams and imitations', *Journal of Design*, p.8

weaving industries across Europe opened up cross-border trade links and competition, particularly between India, Britain and France. As the historian C.H. Rock writes, these three countries were 'selling each other shawls, adapting or pirating each other's designs, and exchanging raw materials'.[9] In this sense, along with other domesticated Asian commodities, the Cashmere shawl acted as a driving force behind industrialisation and social reforms. Its domestication, however, raised concern for, and even fear of, the moral consequences of modernisation and questions around the nature of both material and metaphysical authenticity.[10]

Part Two of this thesis reveals how locally made Cashmere shawls worked as visual symbols in representations of women as an extension of, and in opposition to, both the Indian and French Cashmere imports. It examines the moral debates around imitation, what implications local shawls had for the efficacy of the Indian garment as a status symbol, and what effect locally made Cashmere shawls had on self-conscious displays

[9] Rock, *Paisley Shawls*, p.9; Clabburn claims that by 1818 the overseas market for British imitation Cashmere shawls had expanded to cover Turkey, Persia and even India where they were known as 'Paisley Kashmir' shawls, see Clabburn, 'British Shawls in the Indian Style', *The Kashmir Shawl and Its Indo-French Influence*, pp.244-8

[10] Eaton, Nostalgia for the Exotic, p.228

of respectability. The following three chapters reveal how the financial and social value, material quality, and authenticity of these domesticated shawls became interwoven into social constructs of national identity, status and morality in nineteenth-century Britain.

CHAPTER 4

Manufacturing respectability for Queen and country

Queen Victoria displayed her appreciation for the material qualities and authenticity of the Indian Cashmere shawl, when she wrote of the 'beautiful real' shawl she received from her aunt, Queen Adelaide, on her seventeenth birthday.[1] These qualities were not enough, however, to induce Her Majesty to display the Indian garment as a symbol of status or even as her fashion shawl *de choix*.[2] Her favour, instead, fell on those shawls from the 'imitation line' woven by British manufacturers in

[1] Queen Victoria mentions receiving shawls for a number of birthdays as an adolescent, see RA: VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 24 May 1836 (Queen Victoria's handwriting). RA: VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 24 May 1834 (Queen Victoria's handwriting)

[2] On rejection of shawls see Rizvi and Ahmed, *Pashmina*, pp.226-7

Norwich and Paisley.[3] This chapter will argue that the Queen embraced the domesticated Cashmere shawls, in the first two decades of her reign, as part of the visual symbolism she and her consort Prince Albert used to express a new vision for British society, based on the principles of respectability, domesticity and stability—a vision that would seek to change the way the aristocracy represented itself, yet ultimately would preserve the monarchy as an institution through a particularly volatile political climate.

To borrow Eric Hobsbawm's words, the world of the 1840s in particular 'was out of balance'.[4] A series of global financial crashes between 1825 and 1848 had caused widespread economic fluctuations in manufacturing, industry and employment rates.[5] The 1832 parliamentary reforms had only delivered suffrage to middle-class urban men, giving rise to the Chartist movement, whose demands for universal male

[3] The 'imitation line' referred to British shawls 'closely resembling the Cashmere' from India. They were also referred to simply as 'in imitation' or as the 'Thibet shawl', see 'The Manufacturer's of Scotland', *Hogg's Weekly Instructor,* 92 (28 November 1846), pp.215-8; 'Commerce, Manufactures &c.' *Northern Whig* (9 December 1833), p.4

[4] Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789-1848* (London: Hachette, 2010), ch.16, Google ebook, accessed 14 December 2017

[5] First global financial crash occurred in 1825–7, followed by the second in 1837, trade depressions in 1841-42, and a further financial crash, although less severe, in 1847

suffrage turned increasingly aggressive in the first decade of the Queen's reign.[6] By the late 1840s a series of republican revolutions swept across Europe, culminating in 1848 with the downfall of France's constitutional monarchy, a warning sign for the British sovereign that revolutionary uprisings should be avoided at all costs.

Contemporary commentators recognised that Britain had split into 'two nations', as Benjamin Disraeli declared in his 1845 novel *Sybil*, the rich and the poor.[7] For many, culpability for this split lay with an aristocracy that was ostentatious in their dress and lax in their morals. Thomas Carlyle, for example, argues that the two nations condition was a 'disease' and Chartism was only one of its 'symptoms', which could not be cured until a '*real* aristocracy' was formed of the 'Best, and the Bravest' to lead society through a fast-changing modern world.[8] By '*real*' he meant an aristocracy who by birth and opportunity had the sense of duty and the tools to preserve the wellbeing of the people and the land. Instead, he claims that the current 'apparent Aristocracy', as he calls them, only

[6] Helen Rappaport, *Queen Victoria: A Biographical Companion* (Santa Barbara, Denver and London: ABC-Clio, 2003), pp.87-90

[7] Benjamin Disraeli, *Sybil, Or the Two Nations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.66

[8] Thomas Carlyle, *Chartism,* 1st publ. 1840 (New York: John B. Alden, 1885), pp.6, 44

'wear the clothes' of the 'Best, and the Bravest' but through their self-indulgence do not 'even attempt' to keep the people and land 'safe from all peril'.[9] The result was a divided nation with the potential for those most in peril to rise up against those at the top.

Carlyle's reference to the sartorial masquerade of a sybaritic upper class is significant as it speaks to the heart of Queen Victoria's own ideas on social reform and the part that clothing could play. She too was particularly incensed, as Helen Rappaport argues, by the aristocracy's 'indolence and frivolous lifestyle, as well as its immorality', which she had witnessed first-hand in the court of her opulent and overly ornamented uncle, King George IV.[10] The Queen had also, as this chapter will show, observed her mother's increasing use of luxury fashion—ultimately to her own detriment—to enhance her status as her daughter moved closer to ascending the throne.

As an article in the *Quarterly Review* from 1847 claims, dress, especially for women, had become 'a sort of symbolic language' or a

[9] Carlyle, *Chartism*, p.44

[10] Rappaport notes that the Queen's access to the court was limited by her over-protective mother, see Rappaport, *Queen Victoria*, pp.59, 99

'species of body phrenology' which advertised a woman's qualities.[11] Clothing, therefore, was an instant and powerful form of influence. If the qualities of indolence, frivolity and immorality were evident in overtly fashionable clothing, then the Queen would show, by example, what respectable domesticity looked like. When not obliged to wear state robes or other official attire, she would present herself as a wife and mother rather than a privileged Queen.[12] In private she revealed what she thought of as her paradoxical role as a woman. Writing to her uncle King Leopold of Belgium in 1852, she argues that '*good* women,' should be '*feminine* and *amiable* and *domestic*', and were therefore 'not fitted to reign'.[13] Queen Victoria and Prince Albert had already determined in 1844 to create 'our *happy domestic home*—which gives such a good example'.[14] Clearly demonstrating her intentions to influence society from the beginning of her reign, the Queen tells her new husband in 1839

[11] 'Art of Dress', *Quarterly Review*, p.375

[12] Rappaport, *Queen Victoria*, p.99

[13] 'Queen Victoria to the King of the Belgians, Buckingham Palace, 17 February 1852', *The Letters of Queen Victoria: A Selection from Her Majesty's Correspondence Between the Years 1837 and 1861,* ed. by Arthur Benson and Viscount Esher, 3 vols (London: John Murray, 1908), II, p.367 (emphasis in original)

[14] 'Queen Victoria to the King of the Belgians, Windsor Castle, 29 October 1844', Benson and Esher, *Letters,* II, p.27 (emphasis in original)

to surround himself with a household of '*respectable and distinguished people, and people of good character*' so as not to 'contrast' with hers.[15] From their home, she radiated her respectable domesticity outwards, as she further contrived 'to get a *very* respectable Court'.[16]

To capture and disseminate the essence of this domesticity, the Queen commissioned portraits and genre paintings of her and her family in the style of the *tableau dramatique*.[17] The tableau was a way of capturing a climactic moment, a 'situation' or 'effect' in the life of the monarchy, rather than showing a particular action or character.[18] The Queen's commissions, as Ira Nadel argues, were 'conscientious efforts to record the certainty and assuredness of the Queen and what she and her

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[15] 'Queen Victoria to Prince Albert, Windsor Castle, 15 December 1839', Ibid, I, p.204 (emphasis in original)

[16] 'Queen Victoria to the King of the Belgians, Buckingham Palace, 7 July 1846', Ibid, II, p.87 (emphasis in original)

[17] Ira B. Nadel, 'Portraits of the Queen', *Victorian Poetry,* 25:3/4 (Autumn/Winter, 1987), pp.171, 175

[18] Patrice Pavis, *Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis*, trans. by Christine Shantz (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), pp.336-7, Pavis describes 'Tableau dramaturgy' as 'the epic approach […] focusing on a crisis, [which] breaks down a duration, puts forth fragments of discontinuous time […] is interested not in gradual development but in breaks in the action […] rather than dramatic movement, it is like a still photograph of a scene.'

Martin Meisel, *Realizations: Narrative, Pictorial, and Theatrical Arts in Nineteenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p.47: Meisel defines the crucial distinction in function between the *tableau dramatique* and the *tableau vivant*: 'Both present a readable, picturesque, frozen arrangement of living figures; but the *dramatic tableau* arrested movement, while the *tableau vivant* brought stillness to life'

family represent: the domestic, bourgeois values of stability, comfort, and security'.[19] The most frequently cited painting the Queen commissioned is Edwin Landseer's *Windsor Castle in Modern Times* (1841-43) (Fig. 4.1), which, as Adrienne Munich argues, distinctly differentiates Victoria's court, through its domesticity and modernity, from the monarchies that preceded it.[20] This chapter, however, will examine some of the lesser-known works, commissioned as tableaux in which the Queen acts out 'an imagined or ideal Victorian life', to borrow Munich's words, from her own 'privileged stage', positioned as 'the *one* representing the nation'.[21]

From this position, royal patronage of Paisley and Norwich shawls can be seen as part of this 'performative process', devised to stabilise Britain's hierarchical social structure by attempting visually, if not actually, to homogenise social class.[22] Domesticity, 'home interests' such as local manufacturing and design, and respectability would provide a framework for the construction of a national identity. As a 'home interest', the locally made Cashmere shawl not only provided an antidote

[19] Ira Nadel, 'Portraits of the Queen', p.170
[20] Munich, *Queen Victoria's Secrets*, p.134
[21] Ibid, p.5 (emphasis in original)
[22] Ibid, pp.4-5

to the display of privilege, exclusivity and exoticism associated with the authentic Indian shawl, but also offered opposition to other foreign competition, like the French manufacturers who exported their versions of the imitation shawls to Britain, therefore patriotically and economically supporting local manufacturing.[23]

This chapter will examine a number of works of art representing the Queen wearing Norwich and Paisley shawls, which demonstrate her support for the local industry and how they became part of the Queen's performance of domestic respectability. It will also offer evidence that the Queen's efforts to re-visualise the aristocracy did manage in part to produce the effect of class homogenisation. To this end a comparison will be offered between the earlier portraits (between 1818 and 1838) of the Queen's mother Victoria, Duchess of Kent and Strathearn—one of the most status-conscious members of the royal family—and a painting

[23] Norwich shawls were described as 'home interests' in comparison to those Cashmere shawls produced abroad, either in India or France, see 'Death of Mr William Piper', *Star of the East* (16 April 1889), p.3

produced in 1849 by Franz Xaver Winterhalter, which represents the Duchess in a very different light.[24]

* * *

Queen Victoria's views on the Indian Cashmere shawl as a status symbol were shaped from a young age. As a girl living in Kensington Palace, the future Queen grew up alongside pendant portraits by George Dawe of her mother Victoria, Duchess of Kent (Fig. 4.2), a princess of the German Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld duchy, and her father Edward, Duke of Kent (Fig. 4.3), fourth son of King George III. Their somewhat ill-suited union had been orchestrated swiftly in the race between the monarch's sons to produce an heir for a dynasty lacking in progeny after the untimely death of the King's granddaughter, Charlotte Princess of Wales, in 1817.[25] The portraits were therefore strategically commissioned in 1818 to represent, through this union, a potential heir to the British crown.

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[24] Victoria, Duchess of Kent, was born Victoria Mary Louisa, Princess of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, at Coburg on 17 August 1786. She married Edward, Duke of Kent, the fourth son of George III and Queen Charlotte

[25] Elizabeth Longford, *Victoria R.I.,* 1st publ. 1964 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1998), pp.17-20; Rappaport, *Queen Victoria*, pp.224-6

Dawe's striking three-quarter length seated portrait of the Duchess is in the style of the 'quintessential *chale* painter' from France, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, named as such for his highly finished portraits of French noblewomen featuring Cashmere shawls rendered in minute detail.[26] It would most likely have been through Dawe's painting that the young Victoria was introduced to the Indian Cashmere shawl as a powerful visual status symbol. Like Ingres's paintings of the French nobility, there is little doubt that Dawe's polished surface and fine attention to the details of the fabrics and jewellery are meant to emphasise a woman of significance and to assert a distinctly regal air. Set against a monochromatic background, every detail of the Duchess's dress and ornamentation is enhanced: the black velvet, Empire style gown with its fine, upstanding lace *chérusque*[27]; the diamond tiara crowning a head of carefully rendered curls; the matching diamond earrings; the three strings of pearls around her ivory neck, echoed by the pearl bracelets

[26] Rehman and Jafri, *The Kashmiri Shawl*, p.330; Whiles Dawe's work was often compared by contemporaries to the best works of Sir Thomas Lawrence it was his portrait of Mrs White, which elicited this comment. His portrait of the Duchess of Kent is more highly finished like the Neo-Classicists Jean-Auguste- Domenique Ingres and Jacques-Louis David, see Galina Andreeva, 'Dawe, George (1781–1829)', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, Jan 2008), <doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/7328>

[27] The *chérusque*, an erect *collarette* of lace or gauze, was typically worn at the neckline of court dresses of the first Empire, see Ribiero, *The Art of Dress,* p.122

around both wrists; the gold and gem-set Etruscan armband; and to round it all off the rich crimson Cashmere shawl with a design of olive green, yellow and walnut-coloured *buta*.

The pairing of the black velvet gown and its *chérusque* with the crimson Indian Cashmere shawl visually responds to the costume worn in Dawe's posthumous full-length portrait of Princess Charlotte, exhibited at the Royal Academy in the same year he produced the Duchess's painting (Fig. 4.4). The interrelationship between these two women, that the Duchess may produce an heir to replace the unlucky Princess, is therefore brought to the fore through their style of dress. This connection was acknowledged and emphasised in 2007, when a display of Princess Charlotte's portrait, in the Large Ante-Chamber of the Royal Palace of Brussels, was flanked by copies of Dawe's pendants of the Duke and Duchess of Kent (Fig. 4.5).[28]

At the time her painting was commissioned, the newly arrived German-born Duchess had been well received by the British public, who eagerly awaited the certainty of a new heir to the throne after the shock

[28] The painting of the Duchess of Kent has been re-hung and is currently (2017) in the Coburg Room at the Royal Palace of Brussels along with its pendant of the Duke of Kent

of losing their much-loved Princess.[29] After her first appearance at the opera in July 1818, the *Globe* reported that 'her whole demeanour was extremely affable and condescending, and completely won the hearts of the audience'.[30] For many, this impression of the Duchess would change drastically over the next twenty years. As Helen Rappaport argues, the Duchess became known as 'a self-obsessed, histrionic, and impetuous virago, forever making unreasonable demands about her own status'.[31] After her husband's death in 1820, her close relationship with the ambitious and scheming controller of her household, Sir John Conroy, who only encouraged her self-aggrandisement, was viewed with disdain and severely criticised.[32] By the 1830s, the Duchess's use of fashion to enhance her status can be clearly seen in the portraits she commissioned by Richard Rothwell (1832) (Fig. 4.6), George Hayter (1835) (Fig. 4.7) and Alfred Chalon (1838) (Figs. 4.8 & 4.9), showing her renowned penchant for 'expensive feather hats' and other elaborate headwear, as well as her

[29] Longford, *Victoria R.I.*, p.17

[30] 'King's Theatre', *Globe* (20 July 1818), p.3

[31] Rappaport, *Queen Victoria*, p.224

[32] Ibid, p.226; Katherine Hudson, *A Royal Conflict: Sir John Conroy and the Young Victoria,* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1994)

increasingly absurd puffed *aerophane* sleeves inspired by a French fashion revival of the Renaissance period.[33]

Despite her efforts, the British royal family continued to regard her as 'not quite from the top drawer of the European aristocracy'.[34] For King William IV, she was downright insulting and disrespectful, having—among a number of reputed transgressions against His Majesty—occupied seventeen rooms at Kensington Palace, divided the King's Gallery *and* appropriated his State Bedchamber to use as her boudoir, against his express wishes.[35] Worse still, when Victoria ascended the throne in 1837 the young Queen would deny the Duchess the title of Queen Mother and only allow her an audience by appointment.[36] Behind her back, her own daughter would concur with the Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, that the Duchess was a 'foolish woman', 'a liar and a hypocrite'.[37]

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[33] Rappaport, *Queen Victoria*, p.224; Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress,* pp.123-131

[34] Rappaport, *Queen Victoria*, p.224

[35] Charles Greville, '21 September 1836', *The Greville Memoirs: A Journal of the Reigns of King George IV, King William IV, and Queen Victoria*, ed. by Henry Reeves, 8 vols (London: Longmans, Green, 1899), III, pp.374-377

[36] Rappaport, *Queen Victoria*, p.226; Munich, *Queen Victoria's Secrets*, p.17

[37] Rappaport, *Queen Victoria*, p.226

By all accounts the Queen was not impressed by her mother's infamous self-aggrandisement and political manoeuvring to secure her influence, and this, no doubt, helped shape Queen Victoria's opinions on exotic status symbols and the ostentatious display of privilege. Her views may also have been shaped by contemporary discourse on the dangers of luxury fashion.[38] In the three decades leading up to the Queen's accession, debates had been circulating regarding the erosion of the 'natural' character of Englishwomen through the overt ornamentation of dress. As predicted by the polemic quoted from the *Examiner* (discussed in Chapter 2), ornamental embellishments, like the Duchess's lace *chérusque*, expensive feather hats, *aerophane* sleeves and excessive jewellery, had disfigured the simple *au naturel* elegance of the classical style, which had come to epitomise the Englishwoman in the early Regency period.[39] The Duchess's proclivity for exotic ornamentation exemplifies what the *Examiner* describes as 'aukward [*sic*], gaudy, and

[38] Edward Bulwer-Lytton, *England and the English*, 2 vols (London: R. Bentley, 1833), I, pp.25-37; Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*; Carlyle is not interested in women's clothing in *Sartor Resartus,* however, his 'philosophy of clothing' was nonetheless pertinent in debates about clothing in general, and particularly in relation to class.

[39] Butler,'French Fashion', pp.572-4

slatternly visitations' adopted from the French.[40] Indeed the Duchess's style of dress and her accessories reflect, to perfection, that of the French Queen, Marie Amélie d'Orléans in her portrait by Louis-Édouard Rioult (1839), complete with feathered hat, *aerophane* sleeves, *chérusque* collar and an Indian Cashmere shawl (Fig. 4.10). The Duchess's own foreign origins added fuel to this sort of fire as she was 'widely regarded as a stupid foreigner'.[41] For the *Examiner*, these foreign embellishments were a threat to British women's taste, manners and domesticity—in other words, their respectability—and were therefore a cause for great national concern.[42] In this context, the Indian Cashmere shawl had become associated with or tainted by gaudy, foreign fashions; its exoticism, which had initially generated its desirability, had become its greatest weakness.

If Queen Victoria's aversion to the Indian Cashmere shawl as a social status symbol was formed as a disapproving daughter, then her rejection of the Indian garment as a political symbol was born out of her

[40] Ibid

[41] H.C.G. Matthew and K.D. Reynolds, 'Victoria (1819–1901)', *ODNB* (Oxford University Press, May 2012), <doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/36652>

[42] Butler, 'French Fashion', pp.572-4

role as Queen.[43] The Indian *khil'at* system, as described in the introduction to this thesis, in which the Indian courts and ministers used the gifting of shawls to confer favour, was regarded with scepticism in Britain as 'in India a superior always gives more than he receives'.[44] Early in her reign, on 30 August 1838, the Queen accepted '10 beautiful shawls' presented to her by the Envoy of the Sultan of Muscat, Shaik Ali bin Nassor.[45] Two days earlier, however, she had expressed her misgivings to Lord Melbourne regarding the political and social complexity of receiving exotic diplomatic gifts. Her main concern was not the global implications of receiving these gifts but rather the local message they conveyed. 'I liked to show a disdain for these things,' she told Melbourne, 'for fear I should be accused of common female weakness'.[46]

Upon entering the masculine preserve of political diplomacy, the young and diminutive Queen was all too aware of the dangers befalling women who love 'finery' a little too much. As Munich argues, this

[43] Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, p.401
[44] Ibid, p.118
[45] RA: VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 30 August 1838 (Lord Esher's typescripts)
[46] Ibid

Victorian pejorative conjures more than 'frivolity inappropriate for a Victorian Queen' but suggests a lack of morality too.[47] Referring to an incident from the time of her predecessor, King William IV, the Queen noted her disapproval to Lord Melbourne 'of Queen Adelaide's having got all those Shawls [from] the King of Oude', which she made clear to the Prime Minister 'they should not have accepted'.[48] These shawls had been part of a larger set of gifts sent to King William and Queen Adelaide in 1833, but which, through scandalous political manoeuvring by the President of the Board of Control, Lord Glenelg, had been intercepted and used over the next four years to stir up political agitation with a view to British annexation of the Indian ruler's territory.[49]

Diplomatic gifts continued to be offered despite her misgivings and, with Melbourne's advice, the Queen learnt graciously to accept her part

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[47] Munich, *Queen Victoria's Secrets,* pp.66-7

[48] RA: VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 28 August 1838 (Lord Esher's typescripts); A report in the *Asiatic Journal* suggests that Queen Victoria is referring to a scandal in which the presents given to King William IV and Queen Adelaide on 11 May 1837 were later sold off without following protocol, see 'The presents of the late King of Oude to their Majesties William IV and Queen Adelaide', *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Miscellany,* 37 (31 December 1842), p.303

[49] George Palmer 'A Letter to the Rt. Hon Sir Robert Peel suggesting the Repeal of the 35th & 36th Clauses of the Act 3 & 4 William IV. CAP. 85 etc.', 1 August 1842, (London: Pelham Richardson, 1842), pp.3-12

in the political machinations of Empire creation.[50] From 1847, according to the Treaty of Amritsar, which drew a line under the first Anglo-Sikh war, the Queen received 'three pairs of Cashmere shawls' annually as part of a conditional tribute paid by the newly installed ruler of the Punjab, Maharaja Gulab Singh.[51] The Queen was clearly not oblivious to the Indian Cashmere shawl's appeal and its ability to 'hold its own through all the mutations of fashion'.[52] Many of the tributary shawls, however, were redistributed to the ladies of the aristocracy as wedding gifts, while the Queen turned her attention to the shawls of Norwich and Paisley.[53]

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[50] In 1842 the Queen received a further 'Ten cashmere shawls' from the Imam of Muscat, as the Earl of Aberdeen notes in a letter to the Queen 28 June 1842, see Benson and Esher, *Letters*, I, p.406

[51] After the First Anglo-Sikh War, the Treaty of Amritsar was signed on 16 March 1846. It formalised the arrangements in the Treaty of Lahore between the British East India Company and Gulab Singh Dogra, see 'Article X of the Treaty of 16 March 1846', quoted in Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawl,* p.24; See also Rizvi and Ahmed, *Pashmina,* pp.226-7

[52] 'The Shawl', *Chambers's Journal of Popular Literature, Science and Arts*, 365 (29 December 1860), p.404

[53] Ibid; Alice Mackrell, *Shawls, Stoles and Scarves* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1986), pp.69-70; Rizvi and Ahmed, *Pashmina,* pp.226-7; For later reports of the Queen's gift giving, see 'The Court', *Illustrated London News* (13 November 1869), p.483; 'The Court', *Illustrated London News* (6 June 1874), p.527; 'The Court', *Illustrated London News* (9 October 1875), p.317; 'The Court', *Illustrated London News* (4 January 1879), p.3

In 1843, the same year her husband became President of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, Queen Victoria performed her own act of patronage by appearing in a Paisley shawl, both in print and in paint.[54] The royal couple were both looking for opportunities to encourage the improvement of British design and manufacturing and, to this end, the Queen embraced locally made shawls in the Indian style, like those she had received as diplomatic gifts from the East. She had even sent many of her Indian shawls to local manufacturers out of a 'patriotic desire for the improvement of our shawl patterns', as Harriet Martineau noted in an article on the local shawl industry a decade later.[55]

Royal patronage was not new to shawl weavers. As early as 1792, when the imitation shawl makers were first battling to achieve the same quality as the Indian Cashmere, the manufacturer Philip John Knights of Norwich managed to produce superior and affordable woven shawl fabric, which attracted the purse of Queen Charlotte. 'On Saturday last

[54] 'Her Majesty's Visit to France', *Illustrated London News* (16 September, 1843), pp.177-92; 'General Notices to Candidates', *Transactions of the Society, Instituted at London, for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, 1843–1844*, 54 (London: Society of Arts, 1843), pp.ii, iv-v

[55] Martineau, 'Shawls', p.553

her majesty and all the Princesses appeared in Norwich Shawl Dresses, of Mr. Knights's manufactory,' wrote the *Norfolk Chronicle,* 'and the Royal Family have honoured the manufacturer with further orders'.[56]

After reports about the decline of the 'imitation line' in 1830, when bankruptcy notices were issued for many manufacturers, Queen Adelaide gave directions for the procurement of shawls from Glasgow and Paisley 'with a view to the encouragement of the manufacturers of the west of Scotland'.[57] The following year she patronised Edward Blakely in Norwich, prompting him to advertise to the 'Nobility and Ladies [that] a splendid assortment of the same description of Shawls, which Her Majesty has been pleased to select' were now ready for their inspection.[58]

Royal patronage appears to have had the desired effect on trade. After Queen Adelaide's intervention in the early 1830s, trade in Norwich shawls gradually improved.[59] In Paisley, too, trade was said to be 'uncommonly brisk', with 'good and steady' growth and the imitation line

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[56] 'Supplement to the Norfolk Chronicle', *Norfolk Chronicle, or, Norwich Gazette*, 23 (15 December 1792), p.5

[57] 'The Fashionable World', *Freeman's Journal* (17 November 1830), p.2

[58] 'Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen', *Norwich Mercury* (5 March 1831), p.2

[59] Clabburn, *Norwich Shawl*, p.17

bearing 'as it has hitherto done, the preponderance'.[60] By 1834, the Paisley shawl industry was estimated to be worth £1m.[61] A report on the 'State of Trade in Paisley' reveals that 'nearly two-thirds of our trimming weavers [were] engaged […] at superior wages to what they usually made'.[62] The following year the *Perthshire Chronicle* confirms that this trend had continued:

> At Paisley in the shawl trade the demand for goods is so great, that in general they are taken off as soon as finished, and in some branches of the shawl trade merchants cannot get themselves supplied, the manufacturers being unable to furnish goods for the demand, even to order. The demand for weavers is also fully equal to that for goods, almost every house in the trade is anxious to engage additional hands.[63]

The boom was not to last. After the 1837 transatlantic financial crisis and ensuing global recession, ongoing news of the devastation affecting the Paisley shawl market was reported. When large shawl manufacturing houses stopped payments, the *Public Ledger* warned 'that Paisley will

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[60] 'State of Commerce, Manufactures, and Agriculture, February, 1833', *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, 2 (October 1832–March 1833), p.828; 'Commerce, Manufactures &c.' *Northern Whig* (9 December 1833), p.4

[61] Blair, *The Paisley Shawl*, p.25

[62] 'Agriculture and Commerce', *Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser*, (24 January 1834), p.4

[63] 'Agriculture and Trade', *Dorset County Chronicle* (14 April 1836), p.2

suffer much in consequence'.[64] The *Roscommon Journal* described how these 'heavy failures' and 'severe losses sustained' by several manufacturing houses, had been the cause of a 'considerable number [of] workmen being thrown idle'.[65] In 1838 the government appointed a commission to look into the plight of the handloom weavers, but by 1842 Norwich weavers were on strike over low wages.[66] The Chartists sought to capitalise on the strike by setting up a public meeting in the town centre. Although there was no strike for the Charter itself in Norwich, the London Chartists were able to use the nationwide manufacturing strikes to agitate for the People's Charter to be enacted.[67]

During the terrible trade depression that continued into 1842, Queen Victoria, 'ever ready to sympathise with those in trouble', responded to the crisis by making a nationwide appeal for funds, in an effort to increase awareness of the Paisley manufacturers' plight.[68] More importantly, she used patronage to help the bankrupt Paisley industry by

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[64] 'State of Trade', *Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser* (19 May 1837), p.4

[65] 'Paisley', *Roscommon Journal, and Western Impartial Reporter* (29 July 1837), p.1

[66] Clabburn, *Norwich Shawl,* p.20

[67] Anthony David Smith, 'The Strike for the People's Charter in 1842' (unpublished doctoral thesis, London School of Economics, 2002), p.234

[68] Blair, *Paisley Shawl*, p.26; see also Reilly, *The Paisley Pattern*, p.47

purchasing seventeen of their shawls for £91, selected from a total of thirty specimens valued at £157 5s 6d.[69]

Eighteenth months later, a ten-page special report in the *Illustrated London News* covered the Queen's first trip to France, 'a country often considered [Britain's] hereditary enemy'.[70] According to biographer Stanley Weintraub, the trip was the first by an English sovereign to France since that of Henry VIII in 1520.[71] It was billed as a private family trip, which, as the Prime Minister cautioned, must 'not get mixed either in reality or in appearance with politics'.[72] The Queen and Prince Albert, both members of the 'Coburg family's pan-European network', were nonetheless subtly participating in what was called the 'monarchical principle', that is, the role of European royal houses to create opportunities for 'closer inter-monarchical collaboration' and mediation

[69] The purchase is mentioned in a letter from one of the Queen's secretaries to Provost Henderson, dated 21 January 1842, see Blair, *Paisley Shawl*, p.26; Reilly, *The Paisley Pattern*, p.47

[70] 'Her Majesty's Visit to France.' *Illustrated London News* (16 September 1843), pp.177-92; quote is from Stanley Weintraub, *Uncrowned King: The Life of Prince Albert* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), p.147

[71] Weintraub, *Uncrowned King,* pp.147-8

[72] 'Vicount Melbourne to Queen Victoria, Melbourne, 6 September 1843', Benson and Esher, *Letters*, I, p.491

in the conduct of international diplomacy.[73] Despite previous conflicts between Britain and France, and Queen Victoria's trepidation at meeting King Louis-Philippe[74], in the spirit of the monarchical principle and family ties 'enthusiastic receptions were worked up for Victoria at Le Tréport, *en route* to the Château d'Eu', and she was reportedly 'not displeased at having conveyed some semblance of respectability to the King'.[75]

The *Illustrated London News* enthusiastically describes the Queen wearing 'a purple silk dress, silk bonnet, and Paisley shawl' on the final day of the trip, when she bid a warm farewell to the French royals on

[73] Charles A.M. Jones, 'Heir of the Month, August 2015: Dom Pedro V King of Portugal. The Sorcerer's Apprentice', in AHRC-Project 'Heirs to the Throne in the Constitutional Monarchies of Nineteenth Century Europe (1815–1914)', <http://heirstothethrone-project.net/?page_id=1660>, accessed 12 September 2017; Jones describes the notion of the Monarchical Principle as 'the breadth of the role played by the monarch in the operation of the state. The extent of the parameters to which a prince might govern is dependent on a state's orientation on a liberal/conservative scale e.g. a constitutional (Britain) vs. autocratic (Russia) monarchical system.'

[74] King Leopold writes to Queen Victoria: 'I am sure that the personal contact with the family at Eu would interest you, and at the same time remove some impressions on the subject of the King, which are really untrue', see 'Letter from The King of the Belgians to Queen Victoria, Laeken, 8 September 1843', Benson and Esher, *Letters,* I, p.491; See also Weintraub, *Uncrowned King*, pp.147-8: 'The royal houses of Europe treated Louis-Philippe coldly because he was considered a usurper and because he had initially 'courted popularity as a bourgeois king, thus becoming a traitor to the class into which he had forced himself.'

[75] Weintraub, *Uncrowned King,* pp.147-8

board her yacht, the *Victoria and Albert I.*[76] This *mis-en-scène* of royal *adieus* was also captured in Franz Winterhalter's watercolour *Royal Visit to Louis-Philippe: the Leave-Taking, 7 September 1843*, (*c.*1843) (Fig. 4.11). Winterhalter has depicted the Queen in a plain scarlet crepe dress (rather than purple as reported), which 'very much distressed' Lady Canning, the Queen's fashion-conscious Lady of the Bedchamber, due to its plainness.[77] In the painting, the Queen forms part of the central triangular group, with Prince Albert just behind her and King Louis-Philippe facing her. Her diminutive frame is enveloped in the dark Paisley shawl exemplary of the contemporary 'plaid' shawls which were being produced on the newly installed Jacquard looms in Paisley.[78] This strongly suggests that it is one of the seventeen shawls that the Queen had purchased the previous year. The loose brushstrokes of indigo and yellow swirls suggest an elongated *buta* pattern spreading toward the

[76] 'Her Majesty's Visit to France', p.189; The *Victoria and Albert I* (HMY) royal yacht was launched in 1843 and renamed Osborne I in 1855

[77] Virginia Surtees, *Charlotte Canning: Lady in Waiting to Queen Victoria and Wife of the First Viceroy of India, 1817-61* (London: John Murray, 1975), p.99

78 Paisley twill-woven shawls are often referred to as 'plaid' shawls, more commonly with tartan or chequered patterns but also with the buta motif; The jacquard loom was invented in 1800 by the French weaver and inventor, Joseph M. Jacquard. Although evidence shows there were some jacquard looms in Paisley in the 1830s, they were only used on a large scale from about 1840. See Rock, *Paisley Shawls*, pp. 10-13; Reilly, *Paisley Pattern,* pp.25-6

centre of the shawl, and a hint of pattern can be detected on the Queen's shoulder. With the adoption of the Jacquard loom, designs were no longer restricted to the *pallu* and shawl patterns began to cover the whole surface of the garment.[79] In contrast to this style, the French ladies—Queen Marie Amélie, consort of King Louis-Philippe to the left of Queen Victoria, and Princess Clémentine d'Orléans on the right—wear mantles that are stylistically reminiscent of earlier handloom shawls, produced between 1810 and the 1820s, in which the patterns were largely restricted to a *pallu* of no more than 300 millimetres in height.[80] It is therefore reasonable to surmise that these shawls are *véritables cachemires* from India, rather than from the French *cachemire* line, as the current French shawls would have closely resembled the Jacquard shawl in style and structure had the French ladies been wearing *their* country's latest manufacturing.[81]

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[79] Rock, *Paisley Shawls,* p.13

[80] The draw-loom only allowed for a 300 mm high *palla,* see Rehman and Jafri, *The Kashmiri Shawl*, pp.330-1

[81] Spurr, 'The Kashmir Shawl', pp.30-65; for the development of French design styles, see Lévi-Strauss, *The Cashmere Shawl*, pp.40-4

Queen Victoria is thus declaring her confidence in British design and manufacturing by wearing a British-made shawl and by placing the Paisley shawl on a par with the authentic Indian garments worn by the French, who were also Britain's greatest rivals in the 'imitation line'. Indeed, according to the *Perthshire Courier*, the importation of French shawls had played a fundamental role in exacerbating the effects of the 1837 financial crash on the Paisley shawl industry:

> [I]t has been proved that the trade of Paisley is still suffering severely from the importation of French shawls, which by cheap labour, arising from the absence of heavy taxation and a starvation corn law, enable the manufacturers to introduce them into the English market at little more than half the cost they could be made for in this country.[82]

Even before the slump, Paisley weavers had competed vigorously with the French by purchasing and even plagiarising patterns by their designers.[83] In Paisley the French-inspired designs were so successful that the *Glasgow Chronicle* argued that they were 'the most beautiful that have been introduced, and far excel the East India patterns'. [84] Before the

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[82] 'The Weaver's Commission', *Perthshire Courier* (31 May 1838), p.2

[83] Rehman and Jafri, *The Kashmiri Shawl,* p.337-9; Lévi-Strauss, 'European Shawls in the Tapi Collection', in *Kashmir Shawls: The Tapi Collection*, pp.327-8

[84] 'Agriculture and Commerce', *Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser* (24 January 1834), p.4

crash, as one commentator in 1835 noted, French shawls may have been deemed to be superior in design by some; however, Paisley came out tops in price due to France's battle with high-priced materials, the cost of patterns and the 'expensive Jacquard loom'.[85] Ironically, these opinions were touted at the same time as a German visitor in Kashmir, Carl von Hügel, wrote that the most popular shawls in India were copies of the English imitations.[86] French and British patterns were shipped to India to steer the Indian weavers toward designs specifically adopted for the European market at the same time that Indian men were adopting Western dress for official business and therefore reducing the demand for Kashmiri shawls in India.[87] Manufacturing rivalry to produce the most beautiful and the most affordable shawls therefore created an incredible flow of design and skill in all directions between the weaving centres of Britain, France and India.[88]

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[85] 'The French Shawl Trade', *Perthshire Courier*, (18 June 1835), p.3
[86] Lévi-Strauss, *The Cashmere Shawl,* pp.43-4
[87] Rizvi and Ahmed, *Pashmina,* pp.203-304
[88] Lévi-Strauss, *The Cashmere Shawl,* p.44

To view Queen Victoria's patronage and display of the Paisley shawl on board the royal yacht in 1843 exclusively as an exercise in trade improvements would be to underestimate her intentions. In her desire to reform the privileged classes, her use of the domesticated Indian shawl can be seen as a metaphor for the domestication of the aristocracy. In Winterhalter's painting, the Queen presents herself without the usual opulence associated with the nobility, something the *Illustrated London News* not only noted by commenting that 'nothing could exceed the simplicity of her appearance', but also praised, writing 'nothing could be in better taste than this absence of display'.[89] Both the painting and the newspaper report testify to the Queen's desire to project an image of English nobility with gracious simplicity, moral respectability and a 'bourgeois complexion', to borrow Çrouzet's phrase—the very values and qualities embodied in her bonnet and Paisley shawl.[90]

The moment of climax in the painting comes when the Queen extends the hand of friendship to the French King—something she would have to do five years later when the French monarchy was forced to flee

[89] 'Her Majesty's Visit to France', p.179
[90] Çrouzet, *The Victorian Economy,* p.15

France, and like a mother the Queen took them in and even provided them with clothing.[91] As a *tableau dramatique* the painting captures the essence of the Queen's principles of domestic respectability; her cabin is presented as if a drawing room where the matriarch greets her guests. Adrienne Munich has argued that the Queen 'embodied contradictory meanings of the domestic' in which the domestic could be political but where the political could also be domestic.[92] When she portrayed her family life, as she did in the Landseer painting, she 'promoted the dissemination of domesticating values, with herself as their symbol'.[93] In the *tableau* paintings that depict the Queen away from the home environment, her domesticity is embodied in the Paisley shawl, a product of her country. This domesticity is extended outward to encompass the nation and, eventually, the Empire, with Queen Victoria in a Paisley shawl as its symbolic mother.

References to Queen Victoria's multiple roles as sovereign, wife and mother are, as literary historian, Sharon Aronofsky Weltman remarks,

[91] RA: VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 1 March 1848 (Lord Esher's typescripts)
[92] Munich, *Queen Victoria's Secrets*, p.130
[93] Ibid

common throughout her reign.[94] In the year she bought the seventeen Paisley shawls, the *Illustrated London News* repeatedly presented her as 'Queen' and 'mother' or 'mother of her people'. Pointing out the positive effect of the duality of her role on society, the newspaper writes:[95]

> Queen Victoria will never appear more exalted in the world's opinion than when each side of the picture is thus revealed—the great Queen and stateswoman in the gorgeous palace—the young, lovely, and virtuous mother amidst the pure joys of sylvan retreat and domestic relaxation.[96]

The Queen's two roles as homemaker and nation-shaper are strikingly emphasised in John Thomas's painting of the Queen's Audience Room at Windsor Castle (1861) (Fig. 4.12), which was produced to illustrate the new interior scheme designed by Prince Albert.[97] This scene is at once formal and domestic—a space where only the most important audiences are permitted, but also a room dedicated to the Queen's family, in which she can sit and pass the time with her embroidery. Surrounded by a gallery

[94] Sharon Aronofsky Weltman, '"Be no more housewives, but queens": Queen Victoria and Ruskin's domestic mythology', *Remaking Queen Victoria,* ed. by Margaret Homans and Adrienne Munich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p.121 n12

[95] Weltman, 'Be no more housewives', p.121 n12; Nadel, 'Portraits of the Queen', p.189

[96] 'A Scene in the Nursery at Claremont', *Illustrated London News,* May 1842, p.40

[97] *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love,* exhibition catalogue, ed. by Jonathan Marsden (London: Royal Collection, 2010), p. 201; the figures were added later, possibly by James Roberts who was hired to retouch the drawing in 1861

or *Ahnengalerie* of her predecessors, which traces her lineage back to the Tudor kings, she stands, embroidery in hand, in a plain green velvet dress with bell cuffs and white lace *engageantes*.[98] Across the room a member of her household, possibly her former Lord Chamberlain the Marquess of Breadalbane, introduces an important (but unknown) guest.[99] The serious business of state and the prosaic enjoyment of needlework are visually balanced on either side of a single chair positioned front and centre of the painting, on which the Queen's casually discarded Paisley shawl and straw hat rest, as if she has just returned from a walk in the garden. As Munich writes:

> [Queen Victoria] made her luxurious spaces seem both marvellous and ordinary, telling of her exalted position while promising an emotional stability available to all. Within her various dwellings Queen Victoria performed her quotidian life as if she were everywoman.[100]

Between the marvellous and the ordinary lies the shawl—a garment available to all. This same embodiment of domesticity can be seen in other artworks commissioned by the Queen in which she is represented

[98] Marsden, *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love*, p. 201
[99] Ibid
[100] Munich, *Queen Victoria's Secrets*, p.5

either wearing a shawl, or where the shawl alone represents domesticity. On 8 September 1854, she posed for a photographic *tableau dramatique* by Ernst Becker at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight (Fig. 4.13). Unlike any other image of Queen Victoria, she is unrecognisable. Standing with her back to the camera, revealing only a Paisley shawl, bonnet and umbrella, she faces a desk where Pedro V, the seventeen-year-old King of Portugal, and his younger brother Luis, Duke of Oporto, pose as if conducting serious state affairs. The Queen takes on a more maternal role as instructor, dressed like a middle-class teacher and leaning on her umbrella while the young men enact the roles of sovereign and patrician as if practicing for the young King's coming of age.[101]

In presenting a maternalistic role, the Queen tried 'consciously' to present examples of conduct, to encourage good social behaviour and, as Weltman argues, in doing so she created 'links of comforting similarity between herself and average women'.[102] It was widely known, for example, that the Queen and the ladies of her household knitted scarves

[101] Pedro only came of age on 4 September 1855, being appointed King in his own right. At the time of his visit to England, his father Ferdinand II (the Duchess of Kent's nephew) was acting regent

[102] Weltman, 'Be no more housewives', p.107

and mittens for the soldiers battling in the Crimea.[103] When she asked to be presented to wounded soldiers who had returned from the Crimea, as illustrated in George Housman Thomas's *Queen Victoria and Prince Albert Inspecting Wounded Grenadier Guardsmen at Buckingham Palace, 20 February 1855* (1855) (Fig. 4.14), she greets them as a mother rather than a sovereign, with her brood of boys following close behind her. Despite the setting of the Grand Hall of Buckingham Palace between the main entrance and the Grand Staircase, the Queen is dressed in a plain black dress and large black and gold *buta*-patterned shawl, showing no signs of pomp or ceremony, only understated elegance.[104]

These *tableaux* show how Queen Victoria used the domestication of an exotic Indian garment as a metaphor for domesticating the aristocracy; how she encouraged them to present themselves with respectability, to support local manufacturing and to disseminate the notion of maternal domesticity beyond the walls of the home and into the

[103] Elizabeth Longford, *Queen Victoria: Born to Succeed,* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p.248; Weltman, 'Be no more housewives', p.107

[104] Marsden, *Victoria & Albert: Art & Love,* p.191; The shawl is most likely a Norwich shawl from 1851, see 'Norwich Manufactures for the Great Exhibition of Industry', *Norfolk Chronicle* (12 April 1851), p.2; 'The Messrs. have, at great cost, produced another different kind of cashmere scarf shawl to any hitherto attempted, and one that has a gorgeous appearance, the pattern figures being entirely in gold work, in the Persian or oriental style.'

public spaces of the nation. By the end of the 1840s, this message would carry political as well as social implications as Europe headed toward revolution.

* * *

In May 1849, the newly founded *Journal of Design and Manufactures* reported on the success of a Norwich-based shawl maker at the annual exhibition for the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce.[105] With seventy thousand people visiting, this pet project of Prince Albert's was a huge success and served as a forerunner for the Great Exhibition of 1851.[106] Edward Blakely's Norwich shawls were described in one of his later advertisements as 'Anglo-Indian Shawls, [which] in design and fabric resemble the Shawls of India'.[107] According to the journal, they were a triumph at the Society's exhibition as a 'result

[105] 'Norwich Shawls', *Journal of Design and Manufactures,* 1:3 (May 1849), pp. 78-9; for details of the publication's inception see 'Preface to Volume 1', *Journal of Design and Manufacture,* 1:1 (March, 1849), pp. vii-viii

[106] Prince Albert joined the Society of Art in 1842, becoming president in 26 May 1843 and preparing the Society for the idea of holding annual exhibitions of British manufactures on the model of France and Belgium. These began in 1846 and by 1849 seventy thousand people were visiting the exhibition annually. The Great Exhibition of 1851 was born out of these Society exhibitions, see Weintraub, *Uncrowned King*, pp.222-3

[107] 'Blakely's Anglo-Indian Shawls', *Norfolk Chronicle and Norwich Gazette* (25 May 1850), p. 2

of Her Majesty's direct regard for this class of British manufacture'.[108] The Queen's direct regard for these particular shawls had begun the previous spring. As with the Paisley manufacturers, Norwich was badly affected after '*undue* competition' from French manufacturers and a 'frightful' depreciation in the value of woollen goods had rendered the local shawl market almost 'extinct'.[109] In response, Georgiana Countess Spencer, wife of the Lord Chamberlain of Her Majesty's Household, and Lady Catherine Sarah Boileau of Ketteringham Hall in Norfolk, 'induced' the Queen 'to see what her Norwich subjects could do'.[110] With satisfaction, the *Journal of Design and Manufactures* reassures its readers:

> Since that time the trade has revived, and through further improvements introduced by the manufacturers, the *printed and fillover shawls* of Norwich now equal the richest productions of the looms of France. [111]

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[108] 'Norwich Shawls', *Journal of Design,* p.79

[109] Ibid (emphasis in original)

[110] 'Norwich Shawls', *Journal of Design,* p. 78; Georgiana Countess Spencer's husband Frederick Earl Spencer was appointed Lord Chamberlain of Her Majesty's Household on 8 July 1846, see *London Gazette* (10 July 1846), p.2533; 'Table Talk', *Journal of Design and Manufactures,* 1:1 (March, 1849), p.31

[111] 'Norwich Shawls', *Journal of Design*, pp. 78-9 (emphasis in original); Norwich shawls were also known as fillover shawls, which were woven on a draw loom, allowing more elaborate patterns to be woven than the ordinary hand looms. 'Norwich stuffs: Local textile knowledge', *Selvedge*, 40, May–June 2011, p.61

The journal's report reveals, yet again, that France's domesticated Cashmere shawls being shipped across the Channel were perceived as the main competition for British manufacturers. Import duties on wool and manufactured woollen goods had been repealed in 1845, providing the French with even greater opportunities to undermine British weavers than they had had in the previous decade.[112] The Queen's intervention, however, was more than an attempt to support locally produced goods over foreign imports in a tough climate; her patronage was also politically motivated. One of Blakely's employees, the diligent and spirited William Piper, had suggested to his employer that 'as an antidote to the spread of revolutionary ideas among working men, the "bogey" of that day', Blakely should 'advocate among the upper classes the encouragement of home interests'. [113] Piper's reasoning would have chimed precisely with Queen Victoria's ideas on social reform, and after obtaining an introduction from the Countess Spencer to the Queen he was 'able to effect sales of Norwich shawls with Her Majesty, the queen

[112] Charles Mackay (William Cooke Taylor), *Life and Times of Sir Robert Peel*, 4 (London: Peter Jackson, Late Fisher, Son & Co., 1851), pp.515 and Ch. XVI

[113] 'Death of Mr William Piper', *Star of the East*, p.3

Dowager, the Duchesses of Kent and Cambridge, and many members of the aristocracy'.[114]

A clear indication that a cultural transformation of the aristocracy was taking effect is the fact that the Queen's mother was persuaded to purchase Blakely's Norwich shawls from Piper. A year after her purchase, the Duchess of Kent commissioned Franz Xaver Winterhalter to paint her portrait wearing one of these shawls (Fig. 4.15). The painting was intended for the Queen's thirtieth birthday, and in her diary, dated 'Thursday 24th May 1849' the Queen writes, 'From Mama I received a charming & wonderful likeness of her, painted by Winterhalter, in morning dress & with bonnet & shawl.'[115] Despite the earlier rift between mother and daughter, by 1840 Queen Victoria and the Duchess had been reconciled thanks to the efforts of Prince Albert.[116] Encouraged by his

[114] Ibid; The *Star of the East* report is verified by a notice in the *Norfolk Chronicle* on 7 July 1849, which confirms that, 'the Countess of Leicester and Lady Wodehouse have already patronised this "Norwich Shawl"'. See 'Norwich Manufacturers', *Norfolk Chronicle and Norwich Gazette* (7 July 1849), p.2

[115] RA: VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 24 May 1849 (Princess Beatrice's copies)

[116] Rappaport, *Queen Victoria,* p.227

enthusiasm for family life, the Duchess found a new role as the caring grandmother and threw herself wholeheartedly into these duties.[117]

The original painting, which resides in the Grand Entrance and Marble Hall at Buckingham Palace, is in desperate need of cleaning and restoration. The colours are sepia-stained with years of dirt, the white dress and yellow bonnet have been reduced to the same muddy off-white and the green foliage of the landscape in the background is murky and ominous, overcome by the dark ground showing through the top layers of paint. The Duchess's complexion is ruddy like a weather-beaten sailor and the shawl is so dark that the Royal Collection catalogue describes it as a 'black shawl'. Fortunately, there are three related images which help identify the correct colours and the design of the shawl.

The first is a watercolour sketch by the Queen, accompanying her diary entry, which she has copied from the Winterhalter painting (Fig. 4.16).[118] The sketch shows the Duchess in a white morning dress, yellow bonnet with red trim or lining and a blue and indigo shawl with a vague indication of pattern. The sketch helps identify the colour of the shawl,

[117] Ibid
[118] RA: VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 24 May 1849 (Princess Beatrice's copies)

but also suggests that the pattern on the shawl was probably a *buta* design. A miniature head-and-shoulders copy of the painting by Gugliemo Faija, which can also be found in the Royal Collection, is the second related image (Fig. 4.17). Produced in the same year as the original painting, this watercolour on ivory presents the same colour scheme as the Queen's watercolour sketch, only the palette is more vibrant and the Duchess has a smooth and delicate complexion. The third related image is a lithograph of the painting by Richard James Lane, produced in the same year, which confirms that the shawl is a Norwich style shawl with a tightly designed pattern on a large *palla* (Fig. 4.18).

The most startling thing about this painting is how different the Duchess looks in comparison to her earlier portraits by Dawe, Hayter, Rothwell and Chalon, in which she poses in her Georgian grandiosity with feathered hats, bonnets that are elaborately puffed and frothed with ornamentation or dripping in pearls and a diamond tiara, and wrapped in an Indian shawl. In Winterhalter's portrait she is every bit the respectable middle-class lady out on a country walk, wearing a cheerful pale morning dress, bright yellow poke bonnet and a blue Norwich shawl. By adopting a more sensible style of poke bonnet, she has effectively

rendered her status as an aristocrat unreadable and indistinguishable from the respectable middle classes.[119] In doing so, she has earned herself the sobriquet of 'female patriot', an image far removed from her earlier reputation as a 'stupid foreigner' or 'self-obsessed, histrionic, and impetuous virago'.[120] And the respectable 'female patriot' is, as Judith Lewis argues, exactly what the images of Queen Victoria make so clear.

* * *

The Great Exhibition of 1851 marks a salient moment in the cultural transformation of the aristocracy toward moral respectability. Orchestrated by the Prince Consort, it was a celebration of free trade and global diplomacy, but it also positioned Britain at the very centre and apex of this modern progressive world of consumption. And as demonstrated with William Holman Hunt's portrait of Mrs Fairbairn in the previous chapter, the display and consumption of commodities was a core condition of the 'bourgeois complexion', which dominated cultural

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[119] Judith S. Lewis, *Sacred to Female Patriotism: Gender, Class, and Politics in Late Georgian Britain* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), p.187

[120] Lewis, *Sacred to Female Patriotism*, p.187; Matthew and Reynolds, 'Victoria', *ODNB*; Rappaport, *Queen Victoria*, p.224

representations of women in the mid-nineteenth century.[121] *Patriotic, respectable* consumption was instilled into the minds of visiting families as they swelled with pride at British innovation and manufacturing, reinforcing the Queen's image of moral respectability. As Thomas Richards writes in *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England*:

> The Great Exhibition began by creating an official rhetoric of public representation for the commodity and ended by making the commodity into the one rhetoric of all representation.[122]

Queen Victoria's patronage no doubt furthered the appeal of Norwich shawls at the exhibition. It was widely known that she had bought 'a cashmere and a silk shawl' from Clabburn, Sons & Crisp and placed two orders with Edward Blakely for 'their beautiful shawls made in the pure Indian style'.[123] According to her diary, she made specific time 'to examine in detail the Norwich shawls, of the lightest Cashmir [*sic*] material'.[124] Even before the Exhibition opened, interest in Norwich shawls among the upper echelons of society was evident in the number of

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[121] Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England*, p.73
[122] Ibid, p.73
[123] Clabburn, *Norwich Shawls,* p.133
[124] RA: VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 14 June 1851 (Princess Beatrice's copies)

ladies and gentlemen who visited Norwich manufacturers, 'desirous of seeing some of the new goods intended to be sent to the exhibition of the industry of all nations'.[125]

By the time the Great Exhibition came round, locally made Cashmere shawls had gained a reputation for their superior quality as well as their design originality, without losing the stylistic *buta* motif. In April 1851, the *Norfolk Chronicle* wrote:

> There has been of late great improvement and novelty in the design or style pattern, and less copying of the Indian and French patterns, though to depart from those in any great degree is somewhat hazardous. [...] Messrs. Blakely, who have done so much in drawing the attention of the aristocracy to Norwich shawls, and who obtained for their specimens the medal offered by the Society of Arts, have also determined to send new specimens, of very superior character, to the great exhibition. […] The fabrics are the very best, and the cashmere is quite equal to the real East Indian. The designs are entirely novel. [126]

A turn in the domestication of the Cashmere shawl, when it became an original British rather than an imitation Indian garment, is signalled with this new emphasis on originality and novelty. As the advertisements for

[125] 'Norwich manufactures for the Great Exhibition of Industry', p.2
[126] Ibid

Blakely's in 1855 show, he makes no mention of 'Indian shawls' or 'imitation' but only highlights two distinct categories—'British' and 'foreign'—thus reinforcing the idea of the patriotic consumer.[127]

Another visitor to the Exhibition that summer was William Powell Frith, who took time out on 3 October from his sojourn at Ramsgate to travel to London in order to witness the Crystal Palace spectacle in Hyde Park. There, with his interest in fashion, he would no doubt have seen the displays of Norwich shawls also recorded by Queen Victoria.[128] Frith was in Ramsgate to sketch 'all sorts and conditions of men and women', gathered on the beach at the seaside resort, for his famous modern life panoramic, *Ramsgate Sands, Life at the Seaside* (1851–4) (Fig. 4.19). His diary tells us how he captured the 'very paintable compositions' formed unconsciously by 'pretty groups of ladies' sheltering under their umbrellas or with 'uglies' attached to the ends of their poke bonnets to provide more protection from the sun.[129] They present a wonderful vision of British women, bows tied under their chins and shawls draped over

[127] The advert appears in *Norfolk Chronicle and Norwich Gazette* between Saturday 12 May 1855 and Saturday 29 December 1855

[128] William Powell Frith, *My Autobiography and Reminiscences* (New York: Harper & Bro, 1888), p.171

[129] Ibid

their shoulders while they read and chat, crochet and survey the delights of a summer's day. Behind them throng the variety of British seaside entertainments, showmen and donkey boys, musicians and even touting peddlers, along with groups of poor families trying to make their way to the water's edge.[130]

Despite his reticence regarding modern clothing—or 'unpicturesque dress' as he described the attire of the women on the beach—Frith's panoramic is full of well-researched and keenly observed fashion, with perhaps some creative licence thrown in here and there.[131] Significantly for this chapter, Frith has included no less than eight shawls that can convincingly be compared with shawls in the Castle Museum's Norwich shawl collection.[132] Textile curator Edwina Ehrman highlights how Frith uses clothing to catch the attention of the viewer and carry the narrative, thus making his panoramic paintings immensely popular with Victorian

[130] Edwina Ehrman, 'Frith and Fashion' in *William Powell Frith: painting the Victorian Age,* ed. by Mark Bills and Vivien Knight (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), p.110

[131] Ibid, p.120; Ehrman suggests that Frith's observations are in general well observed but asks, 'did children really wear silk dresses to play at the water's edge, or did Frith introduce the fabric to catch the light […]?

[132] Ibid, see chapter 7; I would like to thank Helen Hoyte for her invaluable time and insight in pointing out the similarities between a number of shawls in the Castle Museum collection, as well as her personal collection, and those in Frith's painting.

audiences. *Ramsgate Sands* was particularly popular with Queen Victoria. Perhaps seeing the ideal image of herself and her mother in the ladies on the beach in their bonnets and shawls, she purchased the painting for 1,000 guineas in 1854 and displayed it prominently at Osborne House.[133]

Visual responses to the domestication and mass production of the Indian Cashmere shawl are most pronounced in the ethnographic modern life panoramic narratives of Frith, George Elgar Hicks and John Ritchie, all produced in the mid-nineteenth century. These paintings show the ubiquity of the Cashmere shawl across a wide section of society. The *buta* pattern, for example, is magnificently displayed on a vermilion shawl worn by an elegant gentlewoman in Ritchie's *A Winter Day in St James's Park* (1858) (Fig. 4.20), as well as on the shawls of working women selling their bric-a-brac in his painting *Border Fair* (*c.*1865) (Fig. 4.21). Their class is contextualised by a combination of colour and place: the gentlewoman of St James's Park in her brilliant vermilion against the muted tones of the working women from a rural border town in the North of England.

[133] Ehrman, 'Frith and Fashion', p.111; Nadel, 'Portraits of the Queen', p.169

Differences in social conditions are also clear between two women who wear *buta*-patterned shawls in Frith's *Derby Day* (1856-8) (Fig. 4.22). On the left of the vast scene, a virtuous-looking country girl wearing her best Paisley shawl fears the loss of respectability and begs her husband not to gamble. He stands in his agricultural smock, his hand already dipping into his pocket for money while surveying the gaming table. In the centre of the image, a self-righteous middle-aged soldier's wife in her Norwich shawl promenades on the arm of her off-duty husband, looking confident of her respectability.

In Hicks's *Dividends Day at the Bank of England* (1859) two young women in *buta*-patterned shawls in the centre of the painting flash competitive glances at each other (Fig. 4.23). The woman on the right is clearly from the countryside. Her dress is plain and devoid of any ribbons or bows. She stands beside her father, who wears a dishevelled dustcoat, while his hat, umbrella and bundle are tossed on the floor in front of them, suggesting the end of a long journey. The woman to their left looks every bit like a sophisticated London gentlewoman, except that her companion's skirt is hitched up to reveal her petticoat and a pair of black booties, a visual sign often used in narrative paintings as a synecdoche for

a woman of loose virtue—a theme which is explored in Chapter 6. The glances between the two women wearing the Cashmere shawls heighten the tension in the crowded room, and their shawls, which have visually created the effect of a mirror image, bring to the fore some of the complexities of Queen Victoria's attempts at the visual homogenisation of society. In the following chapter fears about the moral effects of producing imitation goods and what constitutes authenticity are explored in more detail. For this chapter it will suffice to say that the paintings of Frith, Ritchie and Hicks demonstrate the wide social range of women who wore the Cashmere shawl by the 1850s.

Photographs and *cartes de visite* provide a record of real women who followed in the Queen's footsteps and patronised the local shawl manufacturers. In Countess Hardwicke's photo albums at the Victoria & Albert Museum is a photograph of her daughter, Lady Elizabeth Adeane, from 1858–60 by an unknown photographer (Fig. 4.24). Despite the fifteen-year time lapse, which is only evident in the evolution of the *buta* pattern on the shawl, Lady Elizabeth's sartorial style mimics Queen Victoria's in Winterhalter's 1843 painting of her trip to France, complete with tiered dress, bonnet and Paisley shawl. Perhaps it was this compliment that

secured her the office of Extra Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Victoria from 1874.[134] Also notable is the similarity in styling and pose between Lady Adeane's image and the London lady of possible loose virtue on the left in Hicks's *Dividend Day*.

Between 1843 and 1848, the Edinburgh photographers David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson produced a series of seventeen calotypes of Elizabeth Rigby, the art historian and later wife of the artist Sir Charles Eastlake.[135] In one photograph she is posed full-length seated in a domestic interior in the manner of a contemporary fashion plate (Fig. 4.25), while in another she sits at a desk beside her books, her eyes cast down in introspection (Fig. 4.26).[136] In both photographs Rigby wears what could be either Norwich or Paisley shawls. She was from a well-connected and cultured Norwich family, who would no doubt have supported local talent; however, the photographs were produced in

[134] RA: VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 2 January 1874 (Princess Beatrice's copies)

[135] Sara Stevenson, *David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson: Catalogue of their Calotypes taken between 1843 and 1847 in the Collection of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery* (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 1981); Julie Sheldon, 'Elizabeth Rigby and the Calotypes of Hill and Adamson: Correspondence from the John Murray Archive, 1843–80', *Studies in Photography* (2007), pp.42-8

[136] *The Letters of Elizabeth Rigby, Lady Eastlake,* ed. by Julie Sheldon (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009), pp.8-9

Scotland suggesting the shawls may have been from Paisley. They may even have belonged to the photographers.[137] There are examples of the distinct 'zebra' Cashmere shawl she wears in the bookish image in both the Castle Museum and Paisley Museum collections.[138]

While the Rigby calotypes are composed using the conventions of portraiture, John Dillwyn Llewelyn's photograph *A Welsh Family 'Burning the Guy'* (1851), resembles the panoramic genre paintings of Frith and Hicks (Fig. 4.27). The photograph shows the female members of Llewelyn's family standing with their backs to the camera while they watch the men agitate a large bonfire. The focal point of the picture is not the burning guy, but the woman, probably the photographer's eldest daughter Thereza, who stands in the centre wearing a black square Paisley shawl with clearly defined elongated *buta* covering the whole surface of her back. Llewelyn, a photographer, horticulturist and polymath of independent means, inherited the Penllergare estate and created the picturesque landscape of Penllergare Valley in the mid-

[137] 'Rigby Eastlake, Elizabeth', *Dictionary of Art Historians*, ed. by Lee Sorensen, <http://www.arthistorians.info/rigbye> accessed 18 September 2018

[138] Examples of zebra shawls can be found in the Norwich shawl collection at Castle Museum, see Clabburn, *Norwich Shawls,* pp.93-7. These are mostly from the 1860s, however, a zebra shawl from the 1840s is in the Paisley Museum collection, see Reilly, *The Paisley Pattern,* p.36

nineteenth century.[139] He exhibited the photograph at the first exhibition of the Photographic Society of London in 1854, at which Queen Victoria obtained a print before a further print was requested and sent from Swansea.[140] The similarities in pose and dress of the central figure in the Paisley shawl and Becker's image of the Queen with the King of Portugal, taken that same year, are quite remarkable and suggest the Queen requested the image as reference for the Becker *tableau* (Fig. 4.28).

* * *

Toward the end of the century, the Queen's Private Secretary, Henry Ponsonby, recounted an incident when Lord Rosebery, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'urged that the queen should come in full state with a crown' to an official opening because 'the symbol that unites this vast Empire is a Crown not a bonnet'.[141] Rosebery had failed to see, as

[139] Richard Morris, 'John Dillwyn Llewelyn', *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography,* ed. by John Hannavy, 2 vols (New York and London: Routledge, 2008), I, pp.866-8

[140] Ibid, I, p.867

[141] Arthur Ponsonby, *Henry Ponsonby: His Life From His Letters* (London: Macmillan, 1942), p.79; The official opening was of an exhibition connected to the newly erected Imperial Institute in 1886

Ponsonby notes, that modest dress had become a symbol of the peoples' sovereign,

> whose intimate homeliness endeared her to her subjects […] Crowns and pageantry may have been necessary conventions for other monarchs. To her they were of no significance […] So the bonnet triumphed.[142]

As the images of Queen Victoria featured in this chapter show, the bonnet was not alone in the Queen's costume box. Paisley and Norwich shawls gave the Queen the perfect accessory to demonstrate a new way for the aristocracy to behave, and even to think. She promoted a vision of domestic respectability, which even her ostentatious mother embraced. Transforming her image from one of exclusive superiority to one of respectable domesticity, the Duchess in Winterhalter's portrait could sit happily in Frith's *Ramsgate Sands* (Fig.4.29).

Dressing like a commoner was central to Queen Victoria's mission to cultivate leaders who were free of class and racial discrimination, which, as she emphasised in a letter to Sir Thomas Biddulph, 'is the *one thing* which is most dangerous & reprehensible […] & which the Queen is

[142] Ibid. For more on Henry Ponsonby and Victoria's triumph of the bonnet over the crown, see Munich, *Queen Victoria's Secrets*, p.72-3

always labouring to alter'.[143] The Queen's patronage of the local shawl industry formed part of a wider attempt by the royal family to promote a sense of egalitarianism between the aristocracy and the people, thus avoiding the deep chasms formed between social classes which led to a wave of revolutions across Europe, and, most notably, the end of the Orléans monarchy in France, a loss Queen Victoria felt most deeply.[144] By projecting an image of respectability clothed in affordable British-made mantles rather than expensive and exotic foreign luxuries, the nobility could promote a British national identity that was accessible to women across a much broader class base, from the gentlewoman in St James's to the country folk at the border fair, from the Duchess to the ladies on the beach at Ramsgate, an inclusive domestic identity—a visual unity in representations—that all British women could buy into.

All of the genre paintings and photographs discussed in this chapter were produced after Queen Victoria stood on board the royal yacht with the King of France in 1843, and most were produced in the fifteen years

[143] 'Letter to Sir Thomas Biddulph [c.1892–1900]', RA: C63/88, quoted in Longford, *Victoria R.I.*, p.536. Longford argues that Queen Victoria was on a 'crusade' that was 'part of a deeper, private revolt against discrimination of all kinds, including class.'

[144] RA: VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 1 March 1848, (Princess Beatrice's copies)

following the explosion of consumer enthusiasm at the 1851 Great Exhibition and the launch of the national drive to improve British design. The proliferation of images showing women in Cashmere shawls in the 1850s and early 1860s represents the intersection of modern life painting and the new art of photography with a critical shift in the notion of respectability which had become the dominant visual ideal representing a patriotic, domestic morality. Although respectability carried a distinct middle-class complexion, it was enthusiastically promoted by the noblest woman in the land and embraced by women from all walks of life. The Cashmere shawls of Paisley and Norwich thus rose to the level of the Indian shawl in significance as a visual sign of respectability.

But what were the consequences of visual homogeneity in dress across the class divides? Edward Bulwer-Lytton may have had an equally ferocious attitude toward bad aristocratic behaviour but, unlike the Queen, Bulwer-Lytton argues that it was not *just* the 'eternal vying with each other' or the 'spirit of show' that undermined the integrity of the aristocracy, but also the 'lust of imitation'.[145] He bemoaned 'the power of

[145] Bulwer-Lytton, *England and the English*, II, pp.25-37, quote on p.29

fashion' which had 'increased in proportion as the aristocracy have blended themselves more with the gentry and merchants'.[146] The following chapter will look more closely at the debates regarding authenticity and imitation in relation to images of women wearing the Cashmere shawl in all its material forms, from Paisley printed and Norwich jacquard woven shawls to those 'beautiful real' shawls of Indian Cashmere which Queen Victoria so willingly gave away.[147] The chapter argues that locally made shawls allowed women to express authenticity through their moral respectability rather than through the material attributes of their shawls.

[146] Ibid, II, p.28

[147] Queen Victoria mentions receiving shawls for a number of birthdays as an adolescent, see RA: VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 24 May 1836 (Queen Victoria's handwriting); 24 May 1834 (Queen Victoria's handwriting)

CHAPTER 5

The 'sham' Cashmere and authenticity

The *Journal of Design and Manufactures* complained in 1850 that over the previous few years 'numerous and striking examples' of a 'sham' Cashmere had been attempted in the manufacture of block- and roller-printed fabrics.[1] Not only were shawl manufacturers imitating the *buta* designs of the Indian Cashmere, but they were mimicking the texture of *kani*-woven fabric by incorporating a weave-effect into the printed patterns through geometric edges and diagonal hatching lines, thus imitating the intersection of warp and weft threads in woven shawls (Fig. 5.1). Printers of these shawls, the journal complains, 'have long been

[1] 'Shams and imitations', *Journal of Design*, p.8

striving to imitate the exact appearance of the threads inserted by the loom' in their struggle 'to produce a sham Cashmere or Norwich shawl for a few shillings'.[2] The journal subsequently turns its attention to describing the typical wearer of these sham Paisley or 'Glasgow' shawls as 'the housemaid, who […] affects to pass for her mistress in a cashmere one'.[3] The journal therefore singles out working-class women as the perpetrators of a fraud, and sham shawls, which 'placard the backs of the female population with a sort of material falsehood', as her primary object of deception.[4] The 'indirect effect' on the 'moral tone of all parties', it claims, 'is much greater than is imagined', suggesting therefore that the consequences of this 'falsehood' for society were not only issues of material quality or economic value, but also serious ethical concerns about the representation of truth.[5] The printed mantles were therefore seen as objects of deception, masquerading as an authentic status

[2] 'Shams and imitations', *Journal of Design*, p.8

[3] Ibid, p.9, imitation shawls were printed in other weaving centres, however Paisley was the most prolific in its output, hence the association. See Reilly, *The Paisley Pattern*, p.75

[4] 'Shams and imitations', *Journal of Design*, p.8

[5] Ibid; For more on the ethics of authenticity, see Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1972)

symbol, and fraudulently claiming, if only from afar, the Indian garment's association with respectability.

Initially, as textile historian Valerie Reilly notes, printed shawls were not intended as cheaper copies of the woven Cashmere variety, but were expensive, delicate silk gauzes in a multitude of patterns made for fashionable ladies to wear in the summer months.[6] By the 1850s, however, the popularity of the Indian Cashmere shawl had increased the demand from working-class women for affordable versions, thus fuelling the ethical debates on authenticity and imitation. 'In art, as in morals and politics,' the *Journal of Design* wrote, 'a sham is always despicable in the long run, whatever may be its temporary success'.[7]

As will be demonstrated in this chapter, the journal's polemic against the concept of the 'sham' object, specifically defined by conflating material imitation with the inferior status and immorality of those who own such objects, reflected wider concerns about a 'culture of the copy' and for authenticity as a key moral concept for the Victorians.[8] Fashion

[6] Reilly, *The Paisley Pattern,* pp.41-2
[7] 'Shams and imitations', *Journal of Design*, p.8
[8] Waters, *Commodity Culture in Dickens's* Household Words, pp.40-1

magazines with a far broader readership than the *Journal of Design* reinforced the authenticity message by declaring that a gentlewoman must have a real Indian shawl; or describing those who don't as 'unfortunate', a subtle nineteenth-century reference to a woman who has fallen from grace.[9] The conflation of imitation and immorality in these magazines challenged the notion of respectability made easily visible through the display of *buta*-patterned shawls. Thus, while the Queen patronised good quality, locally made woven Cashmere shawls as both patriotic and respectable, and shawl designers such as Edward Blakeley were awarded prizes at the Great Exhibition, as shown in the previous chapter, printed Cashmere shawls were denounced as immoral. To complicate the debates further, some purists, regardless of the Queen's patronage,[10] declared that any imitation Cashmere, whether printed or woven, was indicative of low status and loose morals, as the journal *Once a Week* implies when they state:

[9] The Silkworm, 'Spinnings in Town', *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (1 October 1871], p.238; For other references calling on women to wear only authentic Indian shawls, see 'Cashmere Shawls: Of What Are They Made?', in *Once a Week: An Illustrated Miscellany* (London: Bradbury & Evans, 1865), XII, pp.68-70; 'Indian Embroidery and Shawls of Kashmere: At the Paris Exhibition of 1867', *Ladies' Treasury* (2 December 1867), p.543

[10] Even while the Queen promoted Norwich and Paisley shawls, she still referred to Indian Cashmere shawls as 'real', see RA: VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 24 May 1836; 24 May 1834 (Queen Victoria's handwriting)

> Every lady who counts amongst her accomplishments the art of shopping, can with unerring precision select a shawl of real Cashmere manufacture out of a promiscuous heap of others, whether of British or foreign manufacture.[11]

The questions this chapter aims to examine are whether cheaper printed shawls, which imitate woven Cashmere, also appear inferior and 'promiscuous' in artistic representations, thereby socially and morally defining their wearer in the same way; and does material authenticity, therefore, appear to signify veracity and respectability. By analysing four paintings by Abraham Solomon, and the socio-political context in which they were produced between 1852 and 1859, this chapter will conclude that Solomon used the printed Paisley shawl in his pendant paintings *Waiting for the Verdict* (1857) (Fig. 5.2) and *Not Guilty* (1859) (Fig. 5.3) to challenge the assumption of inferiority and even criminality ascribed to imitation by commentators such as those described above. Instead, it is argued that the artist presents an expression of integrity in which the shawl, even as an object of material imitation, constitutes a form of

[11] 'Cashmere Shawls: Of What Are They Made?', *Once a Week*, XII, pp.68-70

self-respect or integrity that could be described as personal, metaphysical authenticity.

Furthermore, this chapter proposes a correlation between Solomon's ideas on the themes of authenticity and imitation, and Walter Scott's novel *Saint Ronan's Well* (1824) in which the 'authentic' Indian Cashmere shawl is presented as a sham, while the Paisley shawl is associated with integrity. It is suggested here that two thematically and compositionally related paintings by Solomon, both using shawls as a means of disguise, drew on his earlier interaction with Scott's novel. The first, *The Valour of Love* (1852) (Fig. 5.4), depicts a scene from Scott's novel, while the second, *The Flight from Lucknow* (1858) (Fig. 5.5), represents Solomon's reaction to the Indian Mutiny (1857–9). The latter painting was produced in the year between *Waiting for the Verdict* and *Not Guilty.* The pendant paintings therefore sit on either side of a period when the socio-political reaction in Britain to the Indian Mutiny had a sharp, if short-lived, impact on the perception and consumption of Indian goods, including the 'real' Indian Cashmere shawl. While this chapter is not claiming to reveal a consciously constructed causation between these four paintings and Scott's novel, it does argue that a correlation between

them demonstrates Solomon's engagement with the debates on authenticity. They also present a context for his ultimate rejection, in *Not Guilty,* of the idea that material imitation was a morally damaging 'falsehood' as proposed by the *Journal of Design*.

* * *

On 20 June 1857 when the *Illustrated London News* published its second review of *Waiting for the Verdict* (Fig. 5.2), Solomon's celebrated courthouse drama, exhibited at the Royal Academy that year, it confidently declared that 'a crime has evidently been committed'.[12] Having already acknowledged the painting as 'one of the greatest works of the year', the critic boldly determines the outcome of the painting's narrative to be a 'guilty' verdict on moral grounds, and asserts that this must have been the artist's intention. The painting depicts three generations of a 'peasant family' in the antechamber of an assize court, anxiously awaiting the results of the trial of a man—who we read as the son, father and husband of those present—for an unspecified but serious

[12] 'Waiting for the Verdict', *Illustrated London News [ILN]*, 20 June 1857, p.613; The first review of the painting appeared in 'Exhibition of the Royal Academy', *ILN* (9 May 1857), p.444

crime.[13] The painting is full of powerful expression and pathos, as most contemporary reviews agree.[14] In the background the figure of a barrister can be seen exiting the courtroom with news of the verdict, and through the half-open door the red-robed figure of the judge is visible. The judge is not wearing the black cap worn to pass the death sentence, a small detail missed by all the reviewers and one which offers a hint of a not guilty verdict. In the left foreground of the picture, with his head desperately buried in his weathered hand, is the accused man's father, his faithful hound nervously pressed up against his leg. The old man's 'garb', as the *Liverpool Daily Post* observed, 'is that of a small farmer, velveteen coat, leather leggings, and stout hobnailed shoes'.[15] To the right

[13] 'Exhibition of the Royal Academy', *The Times,* (18 May 1857), p.9; From 1559 the assize courts (which sat at intervals in each county of England and Wales) dealt mainly with serious crimes like homicide, infanticide, rape, theft, highway robbery, assault and forgery among others. See 'Criminal trials in the assize courts 1559–1971', *National Archives,* online, <www.nationalarchives.gov.uk> accessed 10 January 2018

[14] 'Royal Academy', *Critic* (15 May 1857), p.233; 'The Royal Academy', *Athenaeum* (16 May 1857), p.633; 'The Royal Academy', *Literary Gazette, and Journal of Archaeology, Science, and Art* (16 May 1857), p.476; 'The Exhibition of the Royal Academy', *Art Journal*, 3 (1 June 1857), p.174

[15] '*Waiting for the Verdict* and *Not Guilty*', *Liverpool Daily Post* (17 August 1866), p.5; Guilt would mean doom for the whole family. As a 'small farmer' the old man's holdings would have been farmed by the family without hired hands and would therefore have suffered considerably from the loss of the son's labour. See Leigh Shaw-Taylor, 'The rise of agrarian capitalism and the decline of family farming in England', *Economic History Review*, 65:1, (February 2012), p.31; For a useful discussion on the distinction between farm sizes and social status see B.A. Holderness, 'The Victorian Farmer', in *The Victorian Countryside,* I, ed. by G.E. Mingay (London: Routledge, 1981), pp.227-8. Holderness argues that it is difficult to determine

of the father is the accused man's mother, a 'hale old woman' wearing a heavy plaid shawl and a black bonnet, who stoically attempts to amuse her infant grandchild.[16] Standing at the side of the old lady is a pretty young woman in a rust-red bonnet and green cape, presumed to be the accused man's younger sister, who turns her head toward the opening door of the court in nervous anticipation of a verdict. In the centre of the painting, the man's wife is slumped on the floor in abject despair, with a second child sleeping the 'sleep of innocence' with his head on his mother's knees. [17]

Solomon has imbued the painting with gravitas through its triangulated classical composition, prompting scholars to compare it to 'a secular equivalent of a Holy family'.[18] Certainly Raphael's *Madonna of the Meadows* (1506) (Fig. 5.6) comes to mind, although Eastlake's *Hagar and*

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the farmer's 'place' on a Victorian social scale as the term was used to label a heterogeneous group. However, 'at the lowest level, the condition of the poorest farmers differed little from that of the better-off labourers and small village tradesmen', see p.227. The small farm of 50 acres or less was in decline in the second half of the nineteenth century but could still be found 'clinging like moss to an ancient wall', see p.228

[16] 'Waiting for the Verdict and Not Guilty', *Liverpool Daily Post*, p.5

[17] 'Fine Arts Exhibition of the Royal Academy', *Daily News* (5 May 1857), p.2

[18] *Solomon: A Family of Painters,* exh. cat., Geffrye Museum, London (8 November–31 December 1985) Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (18 January–9 March 1986), p.55

Ishmael (1830) (Fig. 5.7), in which mother and child are banished into the wilderness, is a much more appropriate Old Testament reference in the Jewish tradition, with its expression of maternal despair.[19] The figure of the child sleeping on his mother's knee, and the discarded water jug in Eastlake's painting, are strongly echoed in the sleeping boy and his discarded hat in Solomon's composition.

The wife's anguish is painfully visible, her brow is deeply furrowed, and her eyes are red, swollen and brimming with tears. Her hair is dishevelled, her straw bonnet limp at her side and her shawl is discarded in a heap around her on the hard, dirty grey stone steps leading to the courtroom. Although the *Illustrated London News* does not explicitly analyse the family's clothing *per se*, the critic's reading of 'inevitable' guilt in 'every gesture and expression' in the painting, particularly in the figure of the wife, is in general sympathy with the *Journal of Design*'s construct of inferiority and deceit associated with the printed shawl.[20] In the painting, the colourful border and the hint of a *buta* pattern suggest

[19] The Solomon family were very influential and active in the London Jewish community, see Lionel Lambourne, 'Abraham Solomon, Painter of Fashion, and Simeon Solomon, Decadent Artist', *Transactions* (Jewish Historical Society of England), 21 (1962–7), pp.274-5

[20] 'Waiting for the Verdict', *ILN*, p.613

that it is a Paisley shawl, and at a shilling or less the printed version would be affordable for a working-class woman like the farmer's wife.[21] Metonymically, the discarded shawl on the cold courtroom floor, could reasonably be read as an indication of the family's impending downfall. It could even suggest their 'sham' behaviour if the logic set out by the *Journal of Design* is followed.

There is certainly a profound sense of decline working visually across the painting. For this, Solomon has made use of his expertise as a painter of textiles, using the clothing of the three women to express a gradual slide toward the floor and thus reflecting the social decline of the family, and especially the wife, if the accused is convicted.[22] While the sister standing to the rear of the group is still tightly secured in her neat bonnet and cape, the old lady's clothing has been disturbed by the child on her lap, just as her world has been disordered by her own son's arrest. Her skirt is raised to expose her petticoat, and the tartan plaid is roughly

[21] During this period, the Indian Cashmere shawls cost up to £200, while top quality Paisley shawls cost between £20-25, and average shawls as little as £3-9. Even cheaper versions were offered by the block-printing method at a shilling or less. Information collated from John B. Ireland, *From Wall Street to Cashmere, Five Years in Asia, Africa and Europe* (New York, 1859), p.302; Rock, *Paisley Shawls*, pp.11, 17; Zutshi, 'Designed for eternity', p.424

[22] James Dafforne, 'British Artists: their style and character. No. LIX Abraham Solomon', *Art Journal,* VI, (1 February 1862), pp.74-5; Dafforne's discussion of Solomon's work emphasises the artist's knowledge and experience with women's clothing

bunching up over her arm and shoulder. The outstretched arms of the baby, reaching toward its mother, and the folds of the grandmother's plaid lead the viewer's gaze to the wife. As the eye is drawn down the body of the wife by the strong diagonal of her arm, the fabric of her dress and shawl seem to collapse toward the floor; her collar and dress have unbuttoned, her bonnet has slipped from her hand, and her shawl is so lifeless that the *buta* motif is only just discernible to a Victorian audience by now familiar with the famous design. The woman appears 'fallen' and has assumed the physical characteristics of the fallen woman, so popular in Victorian literature and art: the irrevocable loss of innocence and faith, a contamination of the mind and body.[23] Based on these visual signs it is easy to see, with all the evidence stacked up against the family, how the *Illustrated London News* pronounced a guilty verdict.[24]

Prior to this painting, Solomon was known as part of the 'domestic costumé school' of painting, gaining his reputation through his skills in

[23] The 'fallen' woman is discussed in detail in Chapter 6. For the most important scholarship on the subject see Judith R. Walkowitz, Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, class, and the state (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Nead, 'The Magdalen in Modern Times', pp.26-37; Nead, Myths; Attwood, The Prostitute's Body

[24] 'Waiting for the Verdict', *ILN*, p.613

depicting costume and his knowledge of fashion.[25] *The Times* flippantly notes that he was 'hitherto known as a painter of pretty faces in attractive costumes, most at home in that Watteau-world of brocade and high-heeled shoes from which human cares and sorrows seem banished'.[26] Yet his Hogarthian-style social critiques, like *Academy for the Institution in the Discipline of the Fan 1711*[27] (1849) (Fig. 5.8), and *Brunetta and Phillis or 'The Rivals'* (1853) (Fig. 5.9), are unquestionably satirical comments on serious topics, which skilfully raise important issues about the foundations of consumer culture in Britain and the role of building a global empire in the eighteenth century—the very culture that provided the impetus for the boom in imitation goods in the following century.[28] Especially revealing is the latter painting, taken from a satirical story by Richard Steele, originally published in the *Spectator* in 1711, about the

[25] 'Eighty-First Exhibition of the Royal Academy', *Examiner* (26 May 1849), p.326; Dafforne, 'Abraham Solomon', pp.74-5

[26] 'Exhibition of the Royal Academy', *The Times* (18 May 1857), p.9

[27] The subject was inspired by Richard Steele's 'Letter and Petition on the Exercise of the Fan' in *The Spectator* 1711, a tongue-in-cheek letter to the editor mocking the gravity with which the upper classes took sartorial etiquette, see Richard Steele, 'Letter and Petition on the Exercise of the Fan', Addison, *Works*, I, pp.202-3

[28] For more on eighteenth-century imperial expansion and consumption, see Berg, 'Asian Luxuries and the Making of the European Consumer Revolution' *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 228-42. 'Imitation was the means by which a quality consumer good manufacturer was introduced to Europe, and especially to Britain during the later seventeenth and eighteenth century', see p.242

social rivalry between two Englishwomen, both married to wealthy West Indian plantation owners.[29] Constantly vying for higher status, the two women use ball gowns as their armoury in one-upmanship. Solomon represents the moment when Phillis, wearing 'a Brocade more gorgeous and costly than had ever before appeared in that Latitude', swoons as Brunetta enters the 'publick Ball in a plain black Silk Mantua, attended by a beautiful Negro Girl in a Petticoat of the same Brocade with which Phillis was attired'. [30] Even if the narratives in these paintings are exaggerated and amusing, Solomon's use of clothing is both accurate and deliberate, intended to convey the serious issues of social hegemony and the conspicuous consumption of luxuries which, as we saw in Chapter 1, were seriously debated in the public discourse of the eighteenth century.

We can thus assert that in *Waiting for the Verdict* Solomon has deliberately chosen the Paisley shawl, which has been abandoned on the floor in the courthouse, as a significant narrative sign. Given that its owner is a working-class woman, the shawl is most likely her best garment, worn to signal her respectability in front of the court. If the

[29] Steele, 'No.80: History of Phillis and Brunetta', Addison, I, pp.130-1
[30] Steele, 'History of Phillis and Brunetta', I, pp.130-1

shawl is read as a sham, as the *Journal of Design* would have it, then her mask of respectability has slipped, revealing her fraud. The *Illustrated London News* also implies 'inevitable' guilt when they write:

> The heedless and utter despair of the wife would seem, indeed, to intimate that she is cognisant of her husband's guilt, and conscious that a fearful doom—perhaps death itself—is impending over him. [31]

If the wife is 'cognisant' of guilt before receiving the verdict, then the implication is that she is complicit in her husband's crime. Furthermore, her despair is described as 'heedless', suggesting a lack of respectable social etiquette—made visible by sitting on the floor, with hair and clothing dishevelled, but especially through a failure of duty to her children. The latter is reinforced when the reviewer recounts that during the 'paroxysm of her agony' the innocent baby 'holds out its little hands for the accustomed caress; but [the mother] hears and heeds it not, forgetting in her vacant misery even her own offspring'.[32] The critic ultimately allows his imagination to conjure the worst possible narrative for this family by projecting prejudicial assumptions onto them. Adopting

[31] 'Waiting for the Verdict', *ILN*, p.613
[32] Ibid

a deeply unsavoury tone, he hints at the possibility of impropriety between the husband and the sister, asking 'can she be only his half sister?' while automatically assuming the accused man's 'long ill-usage of the now thin and haggard wife'.[33] The wife is thus portrayed as both abused and ill.

This critique of the wife comes at a time when women were increasingly seen as the moral guardians of society.[34] In *Elements of Health, and Principles of Female Hygiene*, published in 1852, Edward Tilt writes, 'in civilized nations matrons give the tone to society; for the rules of morality are placed under their safeguard'.[35] He goes on to warn that if women do not take responsibility for social morality, if they 'laugh down morality' as the French did at the end of the eighteenth century, the result will be social and political disorder. 'Improve her health of body, of mind, and of heart, and the human race would advance to perfection', he insists, but 'deteriorate her, on the contrary, and in the same ratio does

[33] Ibid. The exact relationship between the woman at the rear of the group and the accused man is unclear. The critic implies impropriety with a 'half-sister' suggesting incest. If she is, however, the man's sister-in-law, the critic is suggesting an affair

[34] Nead, *Myths*, pp.91-4

[35] Edward Tilt, *Elements of Health, and Principles of Female Hygiene*, (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1852), p.261

[the human race] degenerate'.[36] While the health and morality of women was deemed crucial to society at large, as art historian Lynda Nead argues, the definition of female health was a complex issue often used to delineate class: the middle-class woman was perceived to be delicate, even frail, but respectable and morally superior, while the working-class woman, who may be physically robust, was seen as a 'source of infection and disease'.[37] In Solomon's painting the collapse of the 'thin and haggard' wife is not read by the *Illustrated London News* critic as the delicacy of a respectable woman; it suggests a working-class woman who has succumbed to disease and infection through immorality, which would 'degenerate' her family and ultimately, it might be inferred, the whole human race. For the critic, her physical deterioration is read alongside her perceived lack of responsibility for her children, and she thus becomes the focus of her husband's guilt. If taken together with the *Journal of Design*'s construction of a sham, her Paisley shawl should be all the proof needed to convict her.

[36] Tilt, *Elements of health,* p.13
[37] Nead, *Myths,* pp.29-30

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The *Journal of Design* was not alone in its condemnation of imitation goods. The mid-nineteenth century was peculiar for the prevalence of multifarious forms of imitation due to new manufacturing technologies that facilitated cheaper mass-produced commodities. In her work *Commodity Culture in Dickens's* 'Household Words' (2008), historian Catherine Waters demonstrates the pervasiveness of this 'new culture of the copy', from extraordinary existential forms of imposture, like fake spectres produced at spiritual séances, to the potentially dangerous adulteration of food and drink.[38] These extreme forms of imitation exacerbated a more 'general concern' about the 'low state of trading morality', which encouraged the imitation of durable goods or cultural artefacts.[39] Imitation thus resulted, Waters argues, in a proliferation of 'vigorous debate' in the periodical press about authenticity and the moral

[38] Waters, *Commodity Culture in Dickens's* Household Words*,* pp.39-64

[39] Waters takes the quote 'low state of trading morality', from 'Shops, Shopkeepers, Shopmen, and Shop Morality: Concluding Article', *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal,* 355 (19 October 1850), p.245. The journal argues that this low morality is 'chargeable […] on the public' because 'the silly desire of getting bargains is at the foundation of almost every cheating practice.'

degradation wrought by imitation.[40] In one article, 'Shops, Shopkeepers, Shopmen, and Shop Morality', published in *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal* in 1850, the consumer environment is linked with issues of morality. According to the writer, the commercial marketplace had been corrupted by the 'bargain-hunting spirit', which encourages 'things real' to be 'kept in the background', while 'counterfeit wares in every possible branch of manufacture, possessing little more than the semblance of the things they represent, fill our shops and warehouses'.[41] The author defines a bargain 'as a fraudulent exchange, by which somebody must suffer'; either the artisan is cheated, the shopkeeper short-changed or the buyer deceived.

> The question of morality is intimately connected with every commercial transaction […] It is the unwillingness to acknowledge this connection that gives rise to a multitude of daily frauds.[42]

The writer's concerns over deception and fraud were not unfounded. Between 1830 and 1870, the largest single category of crime in which the

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[40] Waters, *Commodity Culture*, p.39; Waters's analysis of 'periodical press' concentrates on those articles from *Household Words*

[41] 'Shops, Shopkeepers, Shopmen, and Shop Morality', pp.245-6

[42] Ibid, p.245

word 'respectability' is used in the court proceedings at the Old Bailey (43.6 per cent), are in crimes of 'deception' (Fig. 5.10).[43] While statistically the pairing of criminal deception with the use of the word 'respectability' in court transcripts does not reveal the exact circumstances of the crime or how it relates to the notion of respectability, it gives an indication of the link between issues of status and crimes of deception.

For the Victorian writer George Sala, a whole shopping street in London had become a 'thoroughfare of deceptions and shams' in which 'dwell the great tribe of manufacturers of spurious antiques, of sham *moyen-age* furniture, of fictitious Dresden china, of delusive Stradivarius violins'.[44] Ironically, the notion of authenticity, as the philosopher Somogy Varga argues, was a 'product of modernity', formulated when the commodification of goods like *moyen-age* furniture, Dresden china, and indeed Indian Cashmere shawls, gave rise to a desire for authentic objects, which in turn brought with it the 'issue of suspicion' and uncertainty. 'The fear that the "authentic" might turn out to be a "fake",

[43] Statistics generated by *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, version 7.2 <www.oldbaileyonline.org> accessed 28 January 2018

[44] George A. Sala, 'Travels in Cawdor Street', *Household Words,* 4, 21 February 1852, p.518

a product of reproduction,' Varga argues, 'has followed the ideal [of authenticity] as its shadow'.[45] Uncertainty regarding the authenticity of objects thus reinforces the importance of the judgement of the eye and the ability to read visual signs.

In his famous letter to *The Times* in 1853 defending William Holman Hunt's painting of a courtesan and her lover, John Ruskin equates the 'terrible lustre' of the imitation furniture in their lodgings with the woman's loss of virtue.[46] Yet modernity and mass-market commodity culture also allowed those who could not afford materially authentic clothing to emerge from the shadows of their ubiquitous plain dark-coloured wardrobes. A linen draper noted that earlier in the century the majority of 'common people' wore coarse cotton prints in dark and dull colours until imitation finery became affordable.[47] And one beauty advice writer commented in 1866:

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[45] Somogy Varga, *Authenticity as an Ethical Ideal* (New York: Routledge, 2012), p.4

[46] John Ruskin, 'The Præ-Raphaelites', *The Times* (25 May 1854), p.7; *The Awakening Conscience* (1853) (Fig. 6.1) is discussed in detail in Chapter 6

[47] William Ablett, *Reminiscences of An Old Draper* (London: Sampson Low Marston, Searle, and Rivington, 1876), pp.102–3, quoted in Tammy C. Whitlock, *Crime, Gender and Consumer Culture in Nineteenth-Century England,* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), p.111

> The wife of a labouring man may now purchase a dress of cotton, muslin, or woollen, richly printed with a beautiful pattern, and in brilliant and permanent colours, for a few shillings […] A country wake in the nineteenth-century [*sic*] may display as much finery as a drawing-room of the seventeenth[48]

In this context, as Waters argues, the middle classes in particular struggled to 'distinguish the real from the fake and sought knowledge of the constantly varying semiotic economy of goods that served to communicate social position', thus giving rise to extensive media debates about the topic.[49] Simply knowing the difference between real and fake, however, was not enough for some commentators, who even sought to reinstate sixteenth-century sumptuary laws 'to prevent working women from pushing back the envelope of respectability by donning fashionable clothes'.[50] Articles raising the prospect of sumptuary laws reveal in their anecdotes how mistaken identities and immoral behaviour collide when

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[48] Arnold J. Cooley, *The Toilet and Cosmetic Arts in Ancient and Modern Times* (London: Robert Hardwicke, 1866), p.80, quoted in Whitlock, *Crime, Gender and Consumer Culture*, p.111

[49] Waters, *Commodity Culture*, p.64

[50] Whitlock, *Crime, Gender and Consumer Culture,* p.111; during the reign of Elizabeth I, sumptuary laws were passed to prevent wealthy merchants from dressing as the aristocracy. The laws stayed on the law books until 1604. See Frank Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theory* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984) pp.155–69

'elegantly dressed and graceful creatures' who turn out to be 'only ladies' maids' are scandalously seen 'flirting in Kensington Gardens, upon a Sunday, with Her Majesty's foot-guards'.[51] The writer's indignation reflects fear of the damage such masquerading might do to the respectability of real gentlewomen.

Mistaken identity was not the only moral danger posed by the need to delineate difference: the pressure of staying ahead of what was perceived to be working-class emulation even led middle-class women to act immorally. As Tammy Whitlock notes, the pressure to constantly own the latest *robe à la mode* of the respectable gentlewoman drove some middle-class women to shoplift.[52] The conviction rate for middle-class women was very low, however, as most of their folly was put down to a frail disposition and temporary loss of mental health. Working-class thieves, by contrast, were sentenced to hard labour or worse.[53] Just as Edward Bulwer-Lytton had complained in 1833, the 'lust for imitation' appeared to be wreaking havoc with the fabric of society:

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[51] 'Must We Revive the Sumptuary Laws?' *Young Englishwoman* (January 1865), p.47, quoted in Whitlock, *Crime, Gender and Consumer Culture,* p.112

[52] Ibid

[53] Ibid, p.181

> There was a time when the English were as remarkable among foreigners for their independence and indifference to the mode, as they are now noted for their servile obsequiousness to fashion. These mystic, shifting, and various shades of graduation; these shot-silk colours of society produce this effect: That people have no exact and fixed position—that by acquaintance alone they may rise to look down on their superiors—that while the rank gained by intellect, or by interest, is open but to few, the rank that may be obtained by fashion seems delusively to be open to all. Hence, in the first place, that eternal vying with each other; that spirit of show; that lust of imitation which characterize our countrymen and countrywomen.[54]

Thirty years later Bulwer-Lytton's sentiments were still being echoed in the press, with *The Times* publishing a letter from one 'Beau Jolais' in June 1861 complaining about the 'absurd, artificial, hypocritical atmosphere in which we live' and the '"shams' that surround us'. He squarely places the blame in 'that morbid but almost universal craving on the part of every one to appear something that he is not.[55]

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[54] Bulwer-Lytton, *England and the English,* I, pp.28-32

[55] Beau Jolais, 'Horsebreakers and heartbreakers', *The Times,* (28 June 1861), p.12

At this time of intense criticism of imitation goods, the French-engineered jacquard loom came into full swing in the shawl manufacturing industry, allowing the production of large quantities of woven imitation shawls in a short space of time, some of which were vastly inferior to their handloom-woven predecessors.[56] But it was the new technologies in shawl printing which provided even faster and cheaper results and which saw inferior quality shawls, masquerading as woven Cashmere shawls, flooding the markets and undermining the kind of good quality imitation shawls that Queen Victoria was promoting as the symbol of patriotic, domestic respectability.[57] The increasing demand for printed shawls among the working classes meant that women from all walks of life were now seen in *buta*-ornamented mantles, with no way to tell from a distance whether they were 'real', 'imitation' or 'sham', as we saw in Chapter 3 with Solomon's portrait of Anne Capper (Fig. 3.16).[58]

Paisley's bad reputation was compounded further by the flagrant plagiarism being practiced by some of their manufacturers. Paisley shawl

[56] Rock, *Paisley Shawls*, p.17
[57] Reilly, *The Paisley Pattern,* p.75
[58] Ibid, pp.39-42; Rock, *Paisley Shawls,* p.11

designers, more than any other manufacturers in the country, gained notoriety for stealing designs from Norwich and from French shawl makers, adding a layer of perceived criminality to any shawl from that town. When he participated in a House of Commons inquiry on the subject in 1839, Norwich shawl manufacturer Philip Buxton Etheridge complained bitterly of piracy by the 'Scotch'.[59] He argued that after plagiarising his designs the Scottish manufacturers would 'inundate the market with such abundance that the article becomes quite common and ladies of property will not buy a shawl of which there are many imitations'.

In 1843 the government finally legislated for the provision of pattern registration at the Public Registration Office, but this only protected shawl designs from being copied for three to six months.[60] When the *Journal of Design* launched six years later with a remit to improve British design and manufacturing, the problem was high on their agenda. They

[59] *Reports of Assistant Commissioners on hand-loom weavers in several districts of England, Scotland, Ireland and continental Europe, 1839–40*, 1st edn (London: House of Commons, 1839–40)

[60] Reilly, *The Paisley Pattern,* p.75; see also Clabburn, 'The Norwich Shawl Industry in the Nineteenth Century', *The Norwich Shawl*, p.19; Helen Hoyte, 'Dyers and Printers of Norwich', *The Norwich Shawl,* p.51

'advocated an improved Copyright law for Designs', trying to reassure their readers that 'a Bill to give effect to our advocacy is said to have been prepared by the Board of Trade'.[61] Despite the journal's efforts, very few designs were registered due to the fast pace of change in demand from women who sought the latest style of pattern or shape of shawl; piracy therefore continued unabated.

With the shawl production process in Paisley tainted by fraudulent activities and the women who wore them viewed with suspicion, it is not surprising that the Paisley shawl should become a metonym for criminality in popular culture. In Wilkie Collins's novel *Armadale*, for example, a red Paisley shawl embodies the criminal deeds of Lydia Gwilt, who epitomises the *Journal of Design*'s housemaid 'parading in a Glasgow printed shawl, [who] affects to pass for her mistress in a cashmere one'.[62] Gwilt is not only an imposter who is 'suspected all over the

[61] 'Preface to Volume 1', *Journal of Design and Manufacture*, 1:1 (March, 1849), p.vii; the journal is advocating improvement to the Copyright of Designs Act 1839-1843. There were amendments to the act in 1850, 1858, 1861 and 1865, see Lionel Bently, 'The Design/Copyright Conflict in the United Kingdom: A History', *The Copyright/Design Interface: Past, Present and Future*, ed. by Estelle Derclaye (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp.171-225, esp. Table.6.1, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108182676.008>

[62] 'Shams and imitations', *Journal of Design*, p.9; Wilkie Collins, *Armadale,* 3 vols (Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1866) *Armadale was* serialised in *Cornhill* magazine between November 1864 and June 1866, and published as a two-volume novel in 1866

neighbourhood of intriguing to be mistress of Thorpe-Ambrose', but is also a dangerous murderess.[63] H. F. Chorley in the *Athenaeum* describes her as 'one of the most hardened female villains whose devices and desires have ever blackened fiction', while a critic for the *Spectator* considered her 'a woman fouler than the refuse of the streets, who has lived to the ripe age of thirty-five, and through the horrors of forgery, murder, theft, bigamy, gaol, and attempted suicide, without any trace being left of her beauty'.[64]

Despite her low social status and life of servitude, Gwilt has learnt to masquerade in 'the manner of a lady', wearing 'a thick black veil, a black bonnet, a black silk dress, and a red Paisley shawl'.[65] This is a novel, as Suchitra Choudhury argues, in which 'identities are falsified at the blink of an eyelid', where the reader 'is called to exercise caution, to align their reading process with an experience of everyday shopping—to judge what is fake and what is real'.[66] Collins uses the blood-red imitation shawl as

[63] Collins, *Armadale,* II, p.341

[64] H. F. Chorley, 'New Novels', *Athenaeum* (2 June 1866), p.732; 'Armadale', *Spectator,* (9 June 1866), p.639

[65] Collins, *Armadale,* I, p.151

[66] Choudhury, 'Fashion and the 'Indian Mutiny', p.822

the most vivid warning that Gwilt's respectability is a sham.[67] Rather than visually exposing her with its bright colour, in the context of a modern city the shawl's ubiquity allows Gwilt to evade the detection of those seeking her. 'There are thousands of women in England with beautiful figures—thousands of women who are quietly dressed in black silk gowns and red Paisley shawls', writes Collins, thus fuelling the fear of deception for those middle-class ladies struggling to read the 'semiotic economy of goods'.[68] The *Illustrated London News*'s narrative of guilt projected onto Solomon's courthouse drama can be better understood within this context.

* * *

When Solomon exhibited the pendant to *Waiting for the Verdict* in 1859, the *Illustrated London News* was sorely disappointed. Instead of the highly moralistic tale they anticipated, with righteous 'ethical value and meaning', *Not Guilty* represents justice for a humble and respectable working-class family, emphasising their integrity and their familial bond

[67] Ibid, pp.817-32 for an analysis of Lydia Gwilt's shawl
[68] Collins, *Armadale,* I, p.153; Waters, *Commodity Culture*, p.64

(Fig. 5.3).[69] The meaning of the painting pushes back at the kind of intense social prejudice demonstrated by the *Illustrated London News* in their critique of *Waiting for the Verdict* and disrupts the *Journal of Design*'s thesis that the printed 'sham' shawl is always immoral. The *Daily News*, which also responded contemptuously, complained that 'all our fancied insight into the artist's moral purpose is now […] so rudely overturned.'[70] As a result they refused to 'elucidate the rapture' of the painting, for doing so would undermine their own preconceived notion of the working classes as inherently criminal.

Other reviewers were more generous in their criticism. The *Athenaeum* describes the acquitted man reunited with his family in 'a clamour of joy'.[71] Sitting on a bench in the antechamber of the courthouse, the innocent man is embraced by his relieved wife, and his infant, held up by the happy grandmother, stretches out to touch his

[69] 'Exhibition of the Royal Academy', *Daily News* (30 April 1859), p.2; The title of the painting appears as *Not Guilty (The Acquittal)* in the Tate's 1986 *Illustrated Catalogue of Acquisition,* yet the same catalogue states that on the original label on the stretcher is inscribed, 'No 1 "Not Guilty." companion picture to "Waiting for the Verdict," exhibited in 1857. A Solomon 18 Gower Street Bedford Square.' See *The Tate Gallery 1982–84: Illustrated Catalogue of Acquisitions*, (London: 1986), <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/solomon-not-guilty-the-acquittal-t03615> accessed 30 January 2018

[70] 'Exhibition of the Royal Academy', *Daily News*, p.2

[71] 'Royal Academy', *Athenaeum*, (30 April 1859), p.586

father's face. The grandfather tearfully thanks the barrister, and the younger sister bends down to explain to the bemused little boy what all the fuss is about. The husband 'is a free, innocent, happy man once more,' writes the *Athenaeum,* 'united with stronger bonds to those he has been parted from'.[72] This moment of bonding as a family unit, when 'they cling to him as if they would grow together', is visually emphasised by the positioning of their bodies, linked together by their clothing and accessories to form a complete circle. While the *Athenaeum* approved of this 'clever, honest, and pathetic picture that goes straight to the heart', the *Illustrated London News* was unable to accept the verdict, or the artist's intentions. Instead—and perhaps also to justify their reading of the first painting—they offer a bigoted description of the husband as 'commonplace',

> with a cast about the expression which leaves an unpleasant impression upon the mind that he might possibly have been guilty for all the verdict, and escaped upon technical grounds, or upon the humane dictum of the Judges about 'giving the benefit of a doubt'.[73]

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[72] *Ibid*

[73] 'Royal Academy Exhibition', *ILN* (21 May 1859), p.498

The critic maintains a judgement of guilt based on physical appearance and class, despite the legal verdict. Furthermore, he insists that the wife 'has sunk to the ground' at her husband's knees on his acquittal, as if her social and moral fall is still inevitable, regardless of the outcome of the trail.[74] The *Illustrated London News*'s description is in stark contrast to the *Art Journal*'s review, which characterises the man as a 'stalwart countryman' who has been wrongly accused.[75] These contradistinctions expressed by the critics, between the deserving poor and the rough working class, were deeply ingrained in mid-nineteenth century class rhetoric.[76] Although there is little consensus among historians as to what constituted working-class respectability, there is no doubt that the intrinsic values of self-improvement and personal responsibility that defined bourgeois respectability were also promoted to the lower classes as a way of improving their quality of life and raising the moral standards

[74] Ibid

[75] 'The Exhibition of the Royal Academy', *Art Journal*, (1859), p.170

[76] For example Henry Solly who founded the working men's club movement to separate the 'more prudent, worthier members of the working class' from 'their reckless, drinking, cowardly, or dishonest neighbours', quoted in Bailey, *Popular Culture and Performance*, p.33; n.7 p.218; Daniel Merrick, a Leicester Union leader wrote a short novel in 1876 comparing the lives of two working-class men; one an upstanding, industrious and thrifty Christian, with a hard-working wife and a happy home; the other an ignorant and disreputable drunk, who beats and neglects his wife and children, and has a 'house not a home', Daniel Merrick, *The Warp of Life, or, Social and Moral Threads, A Narrative* (Leicester: C. Merrick, 1876), pp.14-8, 23, 34

of society in general.[77] Historian Gertrude Himmelfarb argues that respectability for the working classes did not mean a 'desire to emulate the middle classes or to aspire to that status', it seems certain that Solomon chose the Paisley shawl to reflect the wife's morally competent and personally authentic.[78] Solomon has used this shawl as part of the metaphorical rising of the wife from her (almost) social fall. The action of the wife physically rising in *Not Guilty* is therefore a significant development in the narrative from her position on the floor in *Waiting for the Verdict*. The first painting made clear what the consequences of a guilty verdict would be, but in the second painting, with her rise from a position of metaphorical poverty, shame and guilt, her restoration is complete.

[77] Smiles, *Self-Help*, a work considered a manual for working-class respectability; Respectability was promoted to the working classes through friendly societies and even trade unions, see Seaman, *Victorian England: Aspects of English and Imperial History*, pp.18, 98-9

[78] Gertrude Himmelfarb argues that respectability was a 'value' that was thoroughly 'indigenous' to the working classes. 'It did not even necessarily imply "bettering" themselves, although that was often its effect. More often it simply meant being respected by themselves and by others in their own community', see Himmelfarb, *The De-Moralization of Society*, pp.21-36; Andrew August argues however, that the construct of working-class respectability was largely aspirational, drawn from those that constituted middle-class respectability', see August, *The British Working Class*, pp.68-71; Bailey argues that for the working classes 'respectability was assumed as a role (or cluster of roles) as much as it was espoused as an ideology', see Bailey, *Popular Culture and Performance*, p.46

Solomon has visualised this restoration in the shawl, which has risen with her, now displaying its rich border pattern of warm red *buta* interlaced with floral elements in blue and green, which delicately extend into the plain cream centre. Most significantly, the arc of fabric formed by the wife's shawl has visually completed the family circle composed around the husband, and, as if to reinforce the point, the grandmother's tartan plaid mantle has fallen from her shoulder to reveal that she too is wearing a printed Paisley shawl beneath. They are represented as a whole, authentic unit, a family of integrity, honesty and self-respect, in opposition to the potential collapse of status and reputation depicted in the first painting. The use of the printed Paisley shawl as a narrative tool to visually signify the family's restoration challenges the notion that personal authenticity and moral respectability are only signified through material authenticity and that an object which is both aesthetically and materially an imitation must signal a sham.

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Solomon's intentions as between the first and second courtroom paintings are not recorded. Even though the first painting had been very

well received, it had not sold at the Royal Academy exhibition and was still on sale for 500 guineas when it was exhibited in Liverpool later that year.[79] Its subject matter has been suggested as a possible reason why. As the *Critic* explains,

> the principal objection to the picture is, that it is far too painful to be often looked at. So tragical a moment as this is hardly fit to be perpetuated in all its terrible features.[80]

This criticism of the painful subject matter has been suggested as the inducement for Solomon's decision to present a positive outcome for the second painting. There was, however, a significant event that occurred between the production of the pendant paintings—the 1857 Indian Mutiny—which this chapter suggests had a significant effect on the choices Solomon made for *Not Guilty*.

The outbreak of the rebellion in India in May that year was shocking for the British public in the metropole. Over the next thirty-eight months they were bombarded by the press with 'a ghastly picture of rapine,

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[79] *The Tate Gallery 1982–84: Illustrated Catalogue of Acquisitions*, (London: 1986), <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/solomon-not-guilty-the-acquittal-t03615> accessed 30 January 2018

[80] 'Art and Artists', *Critic* (1 June 1857), p.255

murder, and loathsome cruelty worse than death'.[81] The massacre of British women and children by Indian rebels, notably at Cawnpore in July 1857, particularly outraged the public and stirred up an atmosphere of revenge.[82] The *Illustrated London News,* for example, was pained but not horrified by the death of British officers, 'for it is the soldier's business to confront death in all its shapes'. In contrast,

> when we read of the atrocities committed upon our women and children the heart of England is stirred; and the sorrow for their fate, great as it is, is overshadowed by the execration which we feel for their unmanly assassins, and by the grim determination that Justice, full and unwavering, shall be done upon them.[83]

Some papers tried to be more subtle as they wrote of the cruelty inflicted on British women's bodies: *The Times* wrote on 6 August that there were 'some acts of atrocity so abominable that they will not even bear narration [...] We cannot print these narratives—they are too foul for

[81] 'The Mutiny in India: Supplement', *ILN* (22 August 1857), p.202; Hostilities were formally ended in July 1859. For more on British women in India during the uprising, see Alison Blunt, 'Embodying war: British women and domestic defilement in the Indian 'Mutiny', 1857–8', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 26:3 (2000) pp.403–28

[82] Blunt, 'Embodying war', pp.408-9,

[83] 'London', *ILN* (5 September 1857), p.238

publication.'[84] Only two days later, however, they wrote of 'deflowered' bodies, and published a sensational letter from an 'Anglo-Bengalee', which describes 'our ladies […] dragged naked through the streets by the rabble of Delhi. […] Their daughters have been cut into snippets and sold piecemeal about the bazaar'.[85]

Noel Paton was among the artists who responded, his painting *In Memoriam* (1858) (Fig. 5.11) commemorating the massacre of British women and children at Cawnpore. The original image showed a group of terrified women and children, along with their *ayah,* praying for salvation as marauding mutineers break through the doors of their shelter. [86] The painting caused outrage, for there were limits to the public's tolerance of visual displays suggesting the rape and murder of British women by Indian men. As Alison Blunt argues, 'to represent British women at Cawnpore was to represent their imminent death to British viewers'.[87]

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[84] *The Times* (6 August 1857), quoted in Blunt, 'Embodying war', p.408

[85] *The Times* (8 August 1857), quoted in Blunt, 'Embodying war', p.408, Blunt notes that there is no evidence that British women were raped yet the accusations circulated widely, see p. 416

[86] *Ayah:* lady's maid

[87] Blunt, 'Embodying war', p.411. Almost 200 women were killed at Cawnpore in July 1857 while more than 200 women survived the siege of Lucknow; Not all reviewers rejected Paton's painting, the critic for the *Illustrated Times* felt Paton's painting was one of the 'most interesting pictures in the entire exhibition' and thought 'the ferocity glaring in the eye, and bristling in the

Paton was forced to replace the rebels with the liberating Scottish regiment who relieved Lucknow after a ninety-day siege, and to change the title to *In Memoriam: Henry Havelock* in commemoration of the British general associated with the recapture of Lucknow.[88]

Solomon responded to the rebellion in India with *The Flight from Lucknow* (1858) (Fig. 5.5), which was exhibited alongside Paton's original conception of the massacre at Cawnpore in 1858. The painting shows a group of British women and children and their *ayah* escaping from Lucknow into the hostile terrain of the Indian countryside.[89] In the foreground are two wives of British officers making haste on a perilous cactus-edged path, followed directly behind by their *ayah* carrying a British toddler, and beyond a further two women and a child. In the

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beard, of that advancing sepoy, with his blood-spotted legs, and his clenched musket' was 'marvellous', see 'The Royal Academy Exhibition', *Illustrated Times* (8 May 1858), p.335

[88] The painting is known today by its original title. See Blunt, 'Embodying war', p.416; Blunt also notes that the engraving made of the revised painting in 1859 was 'designed to Commemorate the Christian Heroism of the British Ladies in India during the Mutiny of 1857', thus moving the narrative even further away from the threatening sepoys.

[89] James John McLeod Innes, *Lucknow and Oude in the Mutiny: A Narrative and a Study,* (London: A.D. Innes and Co, 1895), p.164; Of 510 women and children, three women were killed, while eleven women and fifty-four died from 'exposure and hardships, and want of comforts, but not to want of actual food'.

background a rebel is visible holding his musket rifle, silhouetted against the burning buildings of Lucknow.[90]

The officer's wives in the foreground are dressed in wholly unsuitable European fashions, one in a white gown with lilac bows and a triple string of pearls, the other in an emerald green gown with low décolletage. Over her head, this woman has added an elaborately embroidered Indian shawl, an item of clothing not ordinarily part of the Anglo-Indian wardrobe. As historian Elizabeth Collingham has shown, even while their sisters in the metropole had integrated the Indian Cashmere shawl into women's clothing and British culture, Anglo-Indian women based in India rejected Indian clothing, instead going to 'great lengths to import their European clothing from Britain'.[91] This deliberate demarcation and distinction of Britishness enacted through clothing was meant to ensure that the local population were wholly aware of the superiority of the British, even if their clothing was unsuited to the

[90] From June to November 1857, 240 women and 270 children were confined to the British Residency compound. The majority of these women were married to soldiers, but 69 were related to officers or government officials. See Innes, *Lucknow and Oude in the Mutiny*, p.164.

[91] Collingham, *Imperial Bodies,* p.65

climate.[92] These attitudes to the Anglicisation of the body, however, left British women in particular completely unprepared for their ordeal when the uprising began in 1857.

Rosa Coopland, the widow of the Revd George William Coopland, Chaplain to the East India Company, wrote a moving account of her escape from Gwalior with 'about eight miserable women, alone and unprotected, without food or proper clothing, exhausted by fatigue, and not knowing what to do'.[93] What is clear from her account is how ill-prepared they were and how they sought to disguise themselves in order to survive:

> Mrs. Blake's *kitmutghar*[94], Muza, who remained faithful, now took us to a shady place in the garden, where we lay concealed behind a bank, well covered with trees. He told us to lie down and not to move, and then brought a large dark shawl for my husband, who was in a white suit.[95]

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[92] After the Mutiny the spaces of distinction became even more pronounced, see Ibid, pp.111-3 for the affects of the Mutiny on the Anglicization of the Anglo-Indian body and home

[93] R. M. Coopland, A Lady's Escape from Gwalior and Life in the Fort of Agra During the Mutinies of 1857, (1859), pp. 131-2, online, <http://www.ibiblio.org/britishraj/Coopland/index.html> accessed 25 January 2018

[94] *Kitmutghar*: butler

[95] Coopland, *A Lady's Escape*, pp.120-1, 131

The shawl did not save her husband's life, but the women continued to seek 'some native dresses to disguise' themselves for their journey, and on the road met other Europeans who had done likewise.

In this context, the Indian Cashmere shawl covering the fair-haired woman in *The Flight from Lucknow* is not read as a high-fashion garment that displays respectability, but is understood as a deliberate attempt at disguise. Unlike her companion, whose white dress, pearls and cream European shawl illuminate her body in the dark and identify her as British, the Indian Cashmere shawl is meant to conceal the blonde woman's Britishness, allowing her to blend in with the figure of the *ayah* behind her and visually merge her body with the green and vermilion of the prickly flora of the Indian landscape around her.[96] The shawl is thus intended to 'orientalise' the British woman as a means of escape.

During the Indian Mutiny the Indian Cashmere shawl, the shawl *du jour* for respectable gentlewomen in Britain, became a conflicted object. As literary historian Suzanne Daly argues, the rebellion, and particularly

[96] *Athenaeum,* quoted in *Solomon: A Family of Painters,* exh. catalogue, Geffrye Museum, London (8 November–31 December 1985) Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (18 January–9 March 1986), p.56

the way it was presented to the public in the press, generated 'a wave of anti-Indian sentiment that temporarily cooled the popular taste for Indian commodities'.[97] To compound matters, the public heard reports from Lodiáná (Ludhiana), a British-controlled area of the Punjab, where the 'great colony of Kashmír shawl-weavers' who had been 'sheltered and protected' by the British from 'the oppressive government of the Afghans', joined the rebels and rose up with vehemence against the British on 9 June 1857.[98] Nineteenth-century military historian John Kaye describes how

> the Kashmírís were among the foremost in plundering the Government stores, in pillaging the premises of the American Mission, in burning the churches and buildings, in destroying the printing presses, and in pointing out the residences of Government officials, or known well-wishers of Government, as objects of vengeance for the mutinous troops.[99]

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[97] Daly, *The Empire Inside*, p.33

[98] Sir John Kaye, *The History of the Indian Mutiny of 1857–58*, 6 vols, ed. by Colonel Malleson (London, New York and Bombay: Longmans, Green and Co., 1896), II, p.380. Kaye originally wrote and published the first three volumes between 1864–76. Later they were revised and published with an additional three volumes by Colonel G.B Malleson, between 1888–9; Moorcroft noted the Kashmiri colony in Lodiáná when he passed the area in 1820, see BL: Moorcroft MSS D259, 106; G39 pp.18-9

[99] Kaye, *The History of the Indian Mutiny,* II, p.380

The Indian Mutiny thus re-orientalised the Indian Cashmere shawl; its association with British respectability was therefore disrupted, albeit temporarily, as doubts were raised about the shawl's legitimacy as a 'true test of a gentlewoman's taste' as extolled by the *Ladies' Companion* only seven years before.[100]

In 1859, the year Solomon produced *Not Guilty*, John Ruskin proposed a direct link between the Indian Cashmere shawl and the Indian Mutiny, arguing that only 'cruel and savage nations, cruel in temper, savage in habits and conception' could produce such an object:

> All ornamentation of that lower kind is pre-eminently the gift of cruel persons, of Indians, Saracens, Byzantians, and is the delight of the worst and cruellest nations […] The fancy and delicacy of eye in interweaving lines and arranging colours—mere line and colour, observe, without natural form—seems to be somehow an inheritance of ignorance and cruelty, belonging to men as spots to the tiger or hues to the snake […] Get yourselves to be gentle and civilized, having respect for human life and a desire for good, and somehow or other you will find that you will not be able to make such pretty shawls as before. You know that you cannot make them so pretty as those Sepoys do at this moment.[101]

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[100] 'Chapters On Dress—The Shawl', *Ladies' Companion,* pp.204-6

[101] Ruskin, 'The Two Paths: Lecture II, The Unity of Art (1859), *Complete Works,* ed. by E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn, 39 vols (London: George Allen, 1905), XVI, pp.306-7

After nearly a century of appropriating India's most prized mantle and assimilating it into the *British* ideal of respectable femininity, the Indian Cashmere shawl was once again *Indian*. It was read as an uncivilised object embodying an 'inheritance of ignorance and cruelty'. Where the shawl's ties to its origins had previously been romanticised and made picturesque in Britain, now the 'fancy and delicacy of eye in interweaving lines and arranging colours' was seen as an act of barbarism.[102] As Daly notes, 'Ruskin spells out for us the underside of Orientalism: romanticizing Kashmir shawls may turn into demonizing within the same conceptual framework'.[103]

In an earlier lecture, delivered in January 1858 at the Kensington Museum, Ruskin draws a comparison between the Scottish and Indian ability to produce art, and asks rhetorically whether the 'rude cheques of tartan' from Scotland, or the 'exquisitely fancied involutions of the Cashmere' from India, 'fold habitually over the noblest hearts?'[104] The answer, he argues, has been unequivocally demonstrated by the 'lower

[102] Ibid, XVI, p.307 n.1; For a picturesque account of shawl making in Indian see Martineau, 'Shawls', *Household Words*, p.553

[103] Daly, *The Empire Inside,* pp.33-4

[104] Ruskin, 'The Two Paths: Lecture I, The Deteriorative Power of Conventional Art over Nations (1858), *Works,* XVI, p.262

than bestial […] acts of the Indian race in the year that has just passed' in comparison to the heroism of the Highland soldiers who had relieved the siege of Lucknow only two months before:

> Out of the peat cottage come faith, courage, self-sacrifice, purity, and piety, and whatever else is fruitful in the work of Heaven; out of the ivory palace come treachery, cruelty, cowardice, idolatry, bestiality,—whatever else is fruitful in the work of Hell.[105]

The implications for women wearing the Indian and Paisley shawls could not be clearer. While Ruskin is not making a direct reference to the Paisley shawl, it is clear that any 'rude' art that may be produced in Scotland is worthy as 'the work of Heaven'.[106] Ruskin's endorsement of the cottage over the palace celebrates the authenticity and respectability of the honest working people of Britain just as Solomon's painting of the farmer's wife and her printed Paisley shawl does. It also places the 'real' Indian Cashmere shawl at odds with its usual function as a symbol that reveals or displays status.

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[105] Ibid, XVI, pp.262-3
[106] Ibid

Thematically, the ideas expressed by Ruskin and Solomon had already been explored, albeit less explicitly or vehemently than by Ruskin, in Walter Scott's 1824 novel *Saint Ronan's Well*, a work with which Solomon had engaged in 1852. His painting *The Valour of Love,* produced that year, was not only his first serious engagement with shawls as objects of deception and disguise within the context of class divisions, it was also a scene taken from Scott's novel.[107] Furthermore, the composition for *The Valour of Love* provided a template for the two British women in his later painting *The Flight from Lucknow*, suggesting that there is a correlation between these paintings, Scott's novel and the themes of deception and disguise which are explored across all.

It is worth, therefore, comparing the compositional form of the two principal figures, huddled together on the left of the frame in both

[107] For years the painting was mistakenly identified as another of Solomon's 'genteel' genre scenes featuring 'two sportsmen greeting two ladies in a Highland landscape', when in fact it is a scene from Sir Walter Scott's 1824 novel *Saint Ronan's Well*. In 1973 Christies auction house gave the painting the title *Two Sportsmen Greeting Two Ladies in a Highland Landscape*, see Christie's, London, 16 March 1973, (lot 148). It was bought by J. S. Maas & Co., London, on behalf of Lady Scott. In 2008 Jeremy Maas embellished the description, writing 'an elegant young sportsman seems to be attracted by two pretty girls, much to the irritation of another suitor', see *A Great British Collection: The pictures collected by Sir David and Lady Scott, sold to benefit the Finnis Scott Foundation,* exh. cat. (London: Sotherby's, 19 November 2008), p.212; The 1877 Adam & Charles Black edition of Scott's, *Waverley Novels* includes a steel engraving by Edward Radclyffe from Solomon's painting, confirming its subject as a scene from chapter 25

paintings (Fig. 5.12). The woman positioned on the far left is forward facing with a *contrapposto* stance as her head turns to look to the right or rear of the picture. The figure of the woman on the right leans her body into her companion's in both paintings, bending slightly forward and anxiously holding her friend's hand. The figures in *The Flight from Lucknow* are more animated, their movement is more natural and the modelling of form is much improved, but the similarities are emphatic. Furthermore, both paintings use a shawl as an object of disguise. However, this is where they diverge in meaning. In *The Valour of Love* a gentlewoman is disguised as a peasant using a rough plaid shawl. In the Lucknow painting an Indian Cashmere shawl is used to disguise an English gentlewoman as an Indian *ayah*.

Scott's novel is notoriously complex, with a convoluted plot which is beyond the scope of this thesis to explain in detail. What *is* relevant are the major themes of deception and legitimacy which emerge from the novel. Transposed as imitation and authenticity in the context of the Cashmere shawl, these themes are explored in Solomon's work. Scott's narrative centres on the young protagonists Francis Tyrrel and Clara Mowbray, who, due to the duplicity and deception of others, are

prevented from legitimising their love or their rightful places in respectable society, she as the daughter of a Scottish laird, he as the heir to an earldom. Solomon's painting depicts a critical moment in Scott's narrative when Miss Mowbray first meets her lover Tyrrel, and introduces the themes of deception and legitimacy in the context of class.[108] In playful jest, Miss Mowbray and her companion have used a low-grade Scottish plaid shawl as a disguise to conceal her true status as a noblewoman, with potentially dangerous consequences for her respectability. Scott summarises the scene:

> Miss Mowbray had dressed herself and her companion like country wenches, with a view to surprise the family of one of their better sort of farmers. They had accomplished their purpose greatly to their satisfaction, and were hying home after sunset, when they were encountered by a country fellow […] who being equipped with a glass or two of whisky, saw not the nobility of blood through her disguise, and accosted the daughter of a hundred sires, as he would have done a ewe-milker. [109]

Solomon's painting shows the immediate aftermath, when Tyrrel has intervened, saving Miss Mowbray from being assaulted. Tyrrel raises his

[108] Scott, *Saint Ronan's Well,* II, p.235-6
[109] Ibid

hat in formal greeting, looking directly into the eyes of the young noblewoman while her companion turns away and anxiously clasps her friend's hand. As an act of youthful folly, the disguise has endangered Miss Mowbray's virtue and foretells her actual loss of innocence and respectability at the hands of Tyrrel's half-brother and nemesis. The use of the cheap shawl to masquerade as a peasant girl in jest prefigures the expensive Indian Cashmere shawl—a 'fatal piece of finery'—which she is later forced to wear by her brother to conceal her loss of virtue and respectability.[110] In his narrative, Scott inverts reading the Paisley shawl as a 'sham' with criminal connotations by using a real Indian Cashmere shawl, which was gained by Miss Mowbray's brother through deception, to disguise the tragic loss of a sister's reputation.[111]

Scott engages directly with the themes of authenticity and imitation in a debate between two characters, the 'honest' Mrs Blower, widow of a sailor, who owns a number of Paisley shawls, and Mr Touchwood, an

[110] Scott, *Saint Ronan's Well,* II, p.191
[111] Ibid, II, pp.166-7, 209-10

eccentric English *nabob*.[112] When Mrs Blower comments that 'tere are braw shawls made at paisley, that ye will scarce ken frae foreign', she is immediately rebuked by Mr Touchwood:

> Not know Paisley shawls from Indian, madam? [...] [W]hy, a blind man could tell by the slightest touch of his little finger.[113]

Scott's dialogue between Mrs Blower and Mr Touchwood invites the reader to reconsider the materiality of the different shawls and how they are used to express different notions of authenticity within the story: the one being materially based and determined by social norms, the other self-determined through what Immanuel Kant called 'personal autonomy'.[114] The Indian shawl's association with deception in Scott's

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[112] Scott, *Saint Ronan's Well,* II, pp.191, 210; Literary historian Suchitra Choudhury argues that Scott presents Mrs Blower's defence of the Paisley shawl 'sardonically', however, taking account of an explanation by J.G. Lockhart, Scott's son-in-law and publisher, who wrote in 1837 that Scott 'dashed off these minor personages with, in the painter's phrase, *a rich brush'*, creating generic and somewhat exaggerated types I would argue that Scott uses this exaggeration to draw comparisons between particular socially constructed ideas of principle and class. It is in this light that he presents Mrs Blower as somewhat ignorant, parochial and socially aspirational. Her chief qualities of kindness, candour and probity, however, are repeated throughout the novel, establishing her character as morally competent. Suchitra Choudhury, '"It Was an Imitashon to be Sure": The Imitation Indian Shawl in Design Reform and Imaginative Fiction', *Textile History*, 46:2 (November 2015), p.202; John Gibson Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart.,* 10 vols (Edinburgh: Robert Cadell 1848), V. p.207

[113] Scott, *Saint Ronan's Well*, II, p.192; 'Tere are braw shawls made at paisley, that ye will scarce ken frae foreign' translates as 'there are beautiful shawls made at Paisley, that you will scarcely recognise from a foreign one' [authors translation]

[114] Somogt Varga argues that philosophically, authenticity developed largely through the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, into a notion that stresses self-realisation, free of societal

narrative consistently taints its superior material qualities, while the candour and generosity of 'honest Mrs Blower' is associated with the Paisley shawl, which is, she admits, 'but imitashon to be sure—but it wad keep her shoulders as warm as if it were a real Indian'.[115] Scott thus elevates the material qualities of the Paisley to that of the Indian shawl. Due to her loss of virtue, it is declared that Miss Mowbray 'is not yet of quality sufficient' to wear Mrs Blower's Paisley shawl.[116] Just as Ruskin would claim in the aftermath of the Indian Mutiny thirty-four years later, the Paisley shawl is held up as a good quality, genuine Scottish product rather than an imitation or fake. Crime, loss of morality and deception are associated, not with the honest Paisley shawl in this story, but with the 'real' Indian Cashmere.

* * *

constraints and judgements, see Varga, *Authenticity,* p.1; Lionel Trilling argues that 'from Rousseau we learned that what destroys our authenticity is society—our sentiment of being depends on the opinion of other people', see Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity*, p.93; Immanuel Kant also made the distinction between 'moral autonomy', which is derived from the societal impositions of moral obligations and laws, and 'personal autonomy', which is self-determined rather than imposed from an external force, see Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals* 1st publ. 1797, ed. by Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), discussed in Varga, *Authenticity,* p.2

[115] Scott, *Saint Ronan's Well,* II, p.211

[116] Ibid

At the outset, this chapter sought to address the question: do the cheaper printed imitation shawls, produced in Paisley in the mid-nineteenth century, always appear inferior in artistic representations, thereby defining their wearer socially and morally in this way? The simple answer is no, as Solomon's painting *Not Guilty* so triumphantly shows. However, the socio-political context within which the painting was produced had a large part to play in the artist's ideas. By choosing to use a printed Paisley shawl to metaphorically signal the restoration of the integrity and personal authenticity of an innocent man and his family, Solomon challenges the notion that low-cost material imitation must, as the *Journal of Design* insisted, be read as a 'sham'. This defence of honest working people and the validity of their respectability is consistent with changes over the nineteenth century, as discussed in the previous chapter, in which commodity culture and the reduction in the power of the aristocracy were seen to improve the living conditions of the majority of the population to some degree. In this context, luxury commodities like the Indian Cashmere shawl stood alongside locally made imitations as objects associated with moral respectability within the parameters of an individual's social condition. For some, such as the Queen, the local shawl

was a sign of patriotism and good British values of domestic respectability. For others, as the *Journal of Design* demonstrates, imitation was a sham. In times of extreme moral panic, however, such as that brought on by the Indian Mutiny in 1857, the symbolic associations with certain goods can be temporarily frozen or even reversed as Ruskin's polemic against the Indian Cashmere shawl reveals. Yet, a decade after the Mutiny, when the horrors had faded somewhat in the minds of the public, the Indian Cashmere shawl renewed its semiotic function as a symbol of respectability, with one fashion magazine, the *Ladies' Treasury,* insisting that 'the shawl must be undeniably and manifestly, Indian, or the world of fashion will have nothing to do with it.'[117]

This chapter has drawn out the complexity of the mid-nineteenth century discourse on authenticity and imitation, and its impact on the 'semiotic economy' of both the Indian and printed Paisley shawls.[118] It has been particularly cognisant of the socio-political effect of the Indian Mutiny on sales of Indian goods and demonstrates how the Indian

[117] 'Indian Embroidery and Shawls of Kashmere', *Ladies' Treasury*, p.543
[118] The term 'semiotic economy' is Catherine Water's, see Waters, *Commodity Culture*, p.64

Mutiny shifted conceptions of a foreign shawl which had come to signify British respectability. At the beginning of the 1850s, the *Journal of Design* had determined that the printed Paisley was an expression of material deception and moral degradation among the lower classes, concluding that 'a sham is always despicable in the long run'.[119] Within the growing 'culture of the copy', the printed Paisley became associated, both in reality and in fiction, with fake respectability, mistaken identity and plagiarism, and even in the fictitious case of Lydia Gwilt with murder.

Of course, the *Journal of Design's* polemic must be appreciated within the context of the journal's remit, which was to improve British design. Only two years before the journal complained about the 'sham' Cashmere, it had praised 'a rich Indian pattern printed by Messrs. Inglis and Wakefield' of Glasgow as 'a fine example of printing by the new patented principle'.[120] The journal sought to legitimise the manufacturer's use of an Indian Cashmere pattern by pointing to its true adherence to Indian design principles, the same principles that would be condemned as cruel and uncivilised by Ruskin seven years later,

[119] 'Shams and imitations', *Journal of Design*, p.8
[120] 'Woven Fabrics', *Journal of Design*, 1:2 (April, 1849), p.43

following the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny.[121] For a brief and intense moment at the end of the 1850s the Indian Cashmere shawl was re-orientalised, not as the exotic luxury of the eighteenth century discussed in Chapter 1, but as an object of deception. The context is particularly relevant for understanding the dialogue between Solomon's paintings and Scott's reversal of the Indian shawl's semiotic efficacy.

What Solomon's paintings show is that there is constant interplay between *material* authenticity, which signals a socially constructed notion of respectability, and *personal* authenticity, which is free from social judgement. The role of the printed Paisley shawl in Solomon's courthouse narrative, arguably consistent with Scott's handling of the shawls in *Saint Ronan's Well* and the altered perception (albeit temporary) of Indian shawls due to the 1857 Indian Mutiny, serves to present authenticity as an intrinsic character, locally situated and autonomously expressed.[122] In other words, an authenticity that is based on integrity rather than on socially constructed class-based rules. In the courthouse paintings the family's authenticity is derived, not from their

[121] Ibid, pp.43-4
[122] Zutshi, 'Designed for eternity', pp.420-40

performance of bourgeois-constructed notions of dress and behaviour, but from their integrity and honesty, qualities noted by many reviewers who responded to the paintings. The farmer's wife may very well have bought the shawl as a fashion item with a visual association with respectability; for the artist, however, the shawl is a meaningful object through which to challenge contemporary ideas on what constitutes authenticity. By having the wife abandon the shawl in the first painting, as if abandoning the need for social approval, and then resurrecting the shawl in the second painting, to show the wife's integrity, the artist shows how imitation Cashmere shawls can still signal respectability.

In the following chapter, female virtue and morality will be explored in an age of doubt and uncertainty, in which the prostitute symbolically represented society's moral decay. By juxtaposing the fallen woman and the prostitute with the Cashmere shawl, artists are shown to stretch the garment's semiotic association with respectability to its symbolic limits.

CHAPTER 6

The unravelling threads of respectability

The Cashmere shawl was a fluid object, both in terms of its unstructured material form, its ample folds and ever-evolving *buta* patterns, and in terms of the multiple meanings it communicated when worn or displayed. Nineteenth-century artists understood that there was a consistent relationship between the multifaceted codes of respectability and artistic depictions of the Cashmere shawl, whether the shawls were handloom-woven in Kashmir (like Lady Harewood's shawl in Chapter 3), jacquard-woven in Britain (Queen Victoria's shawls in Chapter 4), or even block-printed in Paisley (the shawl of the poor farmer's wife in Chapter 5). As these previous chapters have demonstrated, the

relationship between the shawl and status was not simply one of direct *attribution,* in which an object bestows a singular meaning on its subject, but rather one of negotiated *association*. In other words, the shawl was consistently associated with an idea of respectable behaviour even when it was used to challenge a particular construct of respectability through the specific context in which it is pictured, its material qualities, and how it relates to the other objects in the paintings. This was demonstrated in Chapter 5 with Solomon's challenge to the assumption that respectability was peculiar to the middle classes or that a respectable woman would only wear a 'real' Indian Cashmere shawl. The nature of the shawl's association with respectability became increasingly complex and visually malleable. The more accessible Cashmere shawls became through cheaper manufacturing methods in Britain, the more shawls could be used negatively to obscure class or feign status. Wilkie Collins's character Lydia Gwilt does just this in *Armadale* with her red Paisley shawl, as noted in the previous chapter.

Coterminous with the increase in accessibility of the Cashmere shawl for a broader consumer market was the diversification across different classes of how respectability was defined, as the previous

chapters have demonstrated. It was *because* of these complexities in meaning brought about by the synergy of material diversification and the polymorphous conditions of respectability, as well as the adaptability of the shawl's physical form as drapery, that artists used the Cashmere shawl to engage with a discourse on nineteenth-century notions of status and social mobility. The shawl allowed artists to reinforce, to complicate or to challenge displays of respectable behaviour in artistic representations of women.

All of the women portrayed in the paintings discussed so far in this thesis represented aspects of respectability through a range of pictorial devices, such as their location, their dress and appearance, and, notably, their shawls. But what are we to make of the presence of the Cashmere shawl in images of prostitutes or fallen women, in which the notion of respectability appears to be untenable?[1] If virtue was, as Woodruff Smith argues, 'the glue that made respectability coherent and gave it a distinctly

[1] The terms 'prostitute' and 'fallen woman' are not fixed but are generally attributable by class; the 'prostitute' is associated with the working class and the 'fallen woman' is usually applied to middle class women who have 'fallen' from grace by having sex outside of marriage. See Nead, *Myths*, pp.94-6; Nine Attwood looks more closely at how the Victorian articulated these definitions, arguing that 'it was never as simple as distinguishing between full-time, part-time, barter or tradition. Any loveless or extramarital sexual activity could be deemed illicit, immoral, "fallen" or as prostitution', see Attwood, *The Prostitute's Body*, pp.13-4

moral character', how viable was the shawl as its signifier when shown in an immoral context?[2] How does the shawl's signification work, for example, in William Holman Hunt's *The Awakening Conscience* (1853) (Fig. 6.1), a painting of a kept mistress pictured with a Cashmere shawl tied around her waist, or John Roddam Spencer Stanhope's *Thoughts of the Past* (1859) (Fig. 6.2), in which a Cashmere shawl is reflected in a mirror inside the grim lodgings of a common prostitute? Had the terms of respectability become so thinly stretched by the mid-nineteenth century that its association with the Cashmere shawl had broken down and become meaningless? Did the shawl simply reflect a fallen woman's past association with respectability? This chapter posits an alternative reading in which artists adopted an allegorical approach to the meaning of the shawl.

Critical analyses of Hunt's *The Awakening Conscience* and Stanhope's *Thoughts of the Past* have mostly ignored the Cashmere shawls, which appear in both paintings. This absence is both surprising and conspicuous for two works so impregnated with allegorical and

[2] Smith, *Consumption and Respectability*, pp.105

typological symbolism.[3] Stanhope's work has received less attention, but Hunt's painting has been 'read', 'rightly read' (as John Ruskin would have it) and 're-read' countless times since it was first exhibited in 1854 through the symbolism of the material objects pictured.[4] The question of why the shawl has been largely ignored will be explored in this chapter, but, in short, it will be shown that a number of problems have obscured the shawl's significance. The first is that the paintings have largely been read as modern life narratives of women with questionable morals, with objects signifying their inevitable fall. Second, the sense of doubt which

[3] Typology describes Old Testament events or people who prefigure or foreshadow New Testament realities through the figure of Christ; events oriented to correspond between the realms of heaven and earth, see Brent E. Parker, 'Typology and Allegory: Is There a Distinction? A Brief Examination of Figural Reading', *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology,* 21:1 (2017), pp.60-1; For Hunt's use of typology see George Landow, *William Holman Hunt and Typological Symbolism,* 1st publ. 1979 (London: Routledge, 2015)

[4] Many contemporary critics struggled to 'read' the meaning of Hunt's painting 'through the agency of its details', see for example the 'The Royal Academy of Arts', *Morning Chronicle*, (29 April 1854), p.5; John Ruskin describes extracting the meaning of the painting by reading the objects 'rightly', see Ruskin, 'The Præ-Raphaelites', *The Times*, p.7. In more recent scholarship, Kate Flint re-examines what it means to 'rightly read' the symbolism in *The Awakening Conscience,* see Kate Flint, 'Reading *The Awakening Conscience* rightly, in *Pre-Raphaelites Reviewed,* ed. by Marcia Pointon (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), pp.45-65; see also Bronkhurst, *William Holman Hunt*, I, pp.165-8; For the most notable critiques of Stanhope's *Thoughts of the Past*, see Alison Smith, 'Thoughts of the Past 1858-9' in *Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant-Garde,* exh. cat., ed. by Tim Barringer, Jason Rosenfeld and Alison Smith (London: Tate Publishing, 2012), p.144; Jonathan P. Ribner, 'The Thames and Sin in the age of the Great Stink: Some artistic and literary responses to a Victorian environmental crisis', *British Art Journal*, 1:2 (Spring 2000), pp.40-1; Simon Poë, 'Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant-Garde: Tate Britain, London, 12 September 2012-13/January 2013, National Gallery, Washington, 17 February-19 May 2013, State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, 10 June–30 September 2013', Review in *British Art Journal*, 13:3 (Winter 2012-13), p.120

permeated mid-nineteenth-century society, especially regarding seeing and reading visual signs of status, created uncertainty when those signs appeared in inappropriate places. And third, the overall moral of the narratives has been limited to the impact of prostitution on society. What is rarely considered in detail is the allegorical function and universal meaning of the figure of the prostitute beyond the subject of prostitution itself.

The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate that the association between the Cashmere shawl—in all its forms—and the notion of respectability remains intact *and* meaningful, even in paintings of women who have lost their virtue. It argues that the convergence of the prostitute or fallen woman and the Cashmere shawl in the same image is a deliberate artistic juxtaposition of two opposing symbols within an allegorical rather than a purely narrative strategy.[5] That is not to say that narrative or typological symbolism should be dismissed; like biblical

[5] Nead, 'The Magdalen in Modern Times, p.30; As a literary form allegory is an extended metaphor or trope that embodies an abstract concept; it is 'a larger narrative episode that has features laden with symbolic function', see Parker, 'Typology and Allegory', p.61; For explanations of 'allegory' see Rita Copeland and Peter T. Struck, Introduction to The Cambridge Companion to Allegory, ed. by Rita Copeland and Peter T. Struck (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University, 2010), pp.1-5; Jon Whitman, Allegory: The Dynamics of an Ancient and Medieval Technique (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), pp.3-5

parables, these stories have a double meaning, one locally situated, the other universally.[6] This chapter is not negating the typological aspects of these paintings; however, it is suggesting that the allegorical aspects have a bearing on how symbols, such as the shawl, are read. When considered within an allegorical framework the prostitute and fallen woman does not represent an individual or even a type of woman; she represents a society in ruin or in dangerous moral decline. The shawl's association with respectability thus becomes crucial in negotiating the degree to which morality has been eroded, or can be restored, if at all.

* * *

In Hunt's *The Awakening Conscience,* the Cashmere shawl is centrally positioned on the canvas, its ground is painted in the brightest hues of rose madder, and the characteristic curvilinear design of a *buta* pattern is clearly evident in vibrant emerald green and strontium yellow.[7] Other than the patch of sunlight in the bottom right-hand corner, which highlights the piano leg and the wool from an unravelling tapestry, the

[6] Landow, *Hunt and Typological Symbolism*, pp.7-16

[7] Joyce H. Townsend et al., *Pre-Raphaelite Painting Techniques* (London: Tate Publishing, 2004), p.175

shawl is the most vibrant object on the canvas. Although critics today may fail to recognise the shawl's design, for a Victorian audience it would be quite recognisable as a Cashmere shawl. It is tied around the hips of the main subject of the painting, a young woman dressed in white linen undergarments, who appears to have arisen from the lap of her piano-playing seducer. In 1860 the Pre-Raphaelite art critic Frederic George Stephens would describe this 'patrician' as 'a showy, handsome tiger, […] heartless and indifferent as death'.[8] The scene is set in a small over-designed parlour with outdated ornate gold-framed mirrors and heavy rosewood furniture. Like the 'handsome tiger', it is 'showy rather than the substantial', as one contemporary critic wrote in 1856:

> [T]he furniture purchased for the temporary household is slop, the carving thereon shows an attempt to imitate in style that of a more expensive kind, false magnificence is visible in every object in the richly decorated mirror frame, and the window cornice.[9]

The painting clearly ignited the negative associations of imitation discussed in the previous chapter. The top hat on the table and the glove

[8] F.G. Stephens, *William Holman Hunt and his Work: A Memoir of the Artist's Life, with Descriptions of his Pictures* (London: Nisbit, 1860), p.32

[9] 'Society of Artists Exhibition', *Birmingham Journal,* (27 September 1856), Supplement, p.2

discarded on the floor further imply the temporary nature of the setting, suggesting the man does not live in the house but has installed the woman as a *demi-mondaine* in a *maison de convenance* for his pleasure. The implication is that he could, at any time, discard her too. She is what nineteenth-century society might call a fallen woman—one who has lost her virtue outside matrimony—a fact made explicit by the lack of a wedding band on her otherwise bejewelled left hand. For veracity Hunt even hired a 'Courtesan's house' called Woodbine Villa in St John's Wood, well known as a location for wealthy gentlemen to keep their mistresses.[10] The sheet music on the piano tells us they are singing Thomas Moore's 'Oft in the Stilly Night', a popular song about nostalgia, which appears to have awoken the woman to her perilous situation, in which she is trapped like the taunted bird captured by the cat beneath the rosewood table. Her life, like the tapestry in the lower right corner, is in grave danger of unravelling.

[10] 'Hunt to Ford Madox Brown', [3 September 1853], MS National Art Library, V&A: Ford Madox Brown Papers, Box 7, MSL/1995/14/43/7; 'John Everett Millais to Hunt', n.d., MS Huntington Library, William Holman Hunt Letters, 1844-1922, MSSHH 382 [1-593]

In the painting as we see it today, the woman's face, which was remodelled in 1856, is wide-eyed, dazed and wearing an expression of realisation. When it was originally exhibited, however, the woman's countenance was, as John Ruskin described it,

> rent from its beauty into sudden horror; the lips half open, indistinct in their purple quivering, the teeth set hard, the eyes filled with the fearful light of futurity and with tears of ancient days.[11]

Hunt's patron, Thomas Fairbairn, had requested the reworking because he 'found it to be so distressful'.[12] It is important to bear this in mind as the visual impact of the remodelling has softened the intensity that Hunt intended and alters our understanding of how the public originally experienced the painting at the 1854 Royal Academy Exhibition.[13]

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[11] Ruskin, 'The Præ-Raphaelites', p.7

[12] William Holman Hunt*, Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1914), II, p.302 n.1, Hunt wrote, 'The face of the girl is not the same in intensity of expression as when first painted. Sir Thomas Fairbairn [patron], on living with it day by day, found it to be so distressful that he persuaded me to reconsider it, […] I can only hope that what I did was with due judgement.'

[13] A.C. Gissing suggests that Hunt regretted modifying the face, but offers no original source, see Gissing, *William Holman Hunt: A Biography,* (London: Duckworth, 1936), p.90, n.1; In a letter to Edward Lear of 16 April 1857 Hunt wrote: 'lately I have had the Awakening Conscience on my easel for a month—in the Spring I had worked on the head of the girl before sending it to Birmingham [Society of Artists exhibition in 1856]—when I was suffering from fever—which defeated my attempt to improve it. I think that I have materially bettered it now—it is now at Manchester—in the Art Treasures [Exhibition]', 'Hunt to Edward Lear of 16 April 1857', John Rylands Library, Manchester: Holman Hunt Manuscripts, GB 133 Eng MS 1214/21

As the woman stands frozen in her awakening, the viewer sees, reflected in a mirror behind her, that she is staring out of a window at a garden bathed in sunlight, while her lover reaches out his right hand imploring her to continue with their ritual of seduction. This gesture pulls the eye back to the most potent area of tension in the painting: the space around their hands—his open, hers held together tightly in an act of resistance—made all the more dramatic by the backdrop of swirling patterns on the shawl (Fig. 6.3). This tension occurs directly in front of her genital area, the most vulnerable part of her body, and forms the centre of a series of radial lines which lead the eye back to that same point over and over again. Besides the two diagonals created by her arms held straight and tight along her body and his arm from the left, there are also diagonals formed by the bottom edges of the shawl and the top edge as it arcs around her hip; the line of his leg; and the folds of her undergarment. Stephen Hackney has suggested that 'the shawl was painted or repainted at a later reworking stage on top of the dress and has more painterly brush marks that follow the embroidery design'.[14] An

[14] Townsend, Ridge and Hackney, *Pre-Raphaelite Painting Techniques*, pp.175-6

x-radiograph reveals, however, that the shawl was definitely part of the original conception and was positioned further across the front of the dress on the right-hand side, falling in a straight line rather than folded toward the back (Fig. 6.4). The dress was therefore painted over the shawl, and a section of the *buta* pattern can just be detected showing through the white dress.

With the shawl so visually integrated into this area of intense discord, the matter of why it has been ignored by most critiques of the painting must be examined. In so doing, it will be shown that two issues have prevented the shawl's significance from being recognised. The first is the problem of Hunt's highly mimetic technique; the second is the dominance of 'reading' the painting in a narrative form, informed by what Lynda Nead has called the 'myth of the prostitute's downward progress', which inevitably ends in disease, decline and death.[15] In this context the shawl becomes a contradiction as an object associated with respectability. These problems prevented critics from seeing the allegorical meaning of the painting which Hunt clearly intended.

[15] Nead, *Myths*, p.141; The 'myth' was applied to fallen women too

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When *The Awakening Conscience* was first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1854, the public and critics appear to have been very unsettled by the subject of prostitution rendered in such detail. One Birmingham critic recognised the problem when writing that 'the masses' found the 'peculiarities of drawing and colour' in the work of the Pre-Raphaelites to be 'all but repulsive'.[16] This peculiarity, of multiple objects rendered in extreme detail with high luminosity within the same focal plane, prevented, the critic suggests, contemplation of the 'volumes of truth' the painting held. Other contemporary reviewers simply dismissed the symbolism as unreadable. The *Morning Chronicle*, for example, argued that this 'absolutely disagreeable' subject 'fails to express its own meaning, either in its general composition or through the agency of its details'.[17] This inability to understand the painting may, in part, have been due to the mimetic painting technique Hunt used. The artist's intention that paintings should 'convey an elevated idea of the object to

[16] 'Society of Artists Exhibition.' *Birmingham Journal*, p.2
[17] 'The Royal Academy of Arts', *Morning Chronicle*, (29 April 1854), p.5

the spectator', was obscured by the intensity of multiple objects across the canvas, all painted with the same strength of focus and precision.[18] As Carol Jacobi writes, his realism was 'inimical to its spiritual scheme and subject'.[19] The failure of the 'agency of its details' exposes the limits, for some viewers, of a complex visual language which mimics the chaos of a busy marketplace crammed with goods and advertising signs, all vying for attention at once.[20] The shawl was just one of about two-dozen objects painted with exacting mimesis. As Jacobi argues, 'the mimesis and the gazes it provokes distract from the coherence of the design'. This 'fragmentation of the gaze that apprehends the signifying scheme of the design' consequently, she argues, subverts the meaning of the painting.[21] In other words, the viewer is distracted from the deeper meaning of the whole scheme by the immediacy of the detail. Furthermore, Jacobi argues, '[t]he iconographical tension between the literal and the symbolic aspects of Hunt's paintings […] manifests itself as a dislocation within

[18] William Holman Hunt, 'Hunt to Tupper, 20 June 1878', *A Pre-Raphaelite Friendship: The Correspondence of William Holman Hunt and John Lucas Tupper,* ed. by James H. Coombs et al. (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1986), p.246

[19] Carol Jacobi, *William Holman Hunt: Painter, Painting, Paint* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2006), p.213

[20] 'The Royal Academy of Arts', *Morning Chronicle*, p.5

[21] Jacobi, *William Holman Hunt,* p.213

their pictorial language itself', which accounts for the inability of some critics to read the signs.[22]

Unlike the *Morning Chronicle,* other critics did not object to the 'extreme accuracy' used by Hunt in representing 'common things'. For the *Examiner,* the painting was 'enriched […] with a great store of ingenious and appropriate detail', but was judged to be too painful to engage with the meaning.[23] For this critic, the artist, 'by his accuracy', should only 'endeavour to give pleasure'. The respectable audience visiting the Royal Academy wanted a complimentary vision of their world reflected back to them in modern life paintings. They found this in Frith's *Ramsgate Sands, Life at the Seaside* (1851–4) (Fig. 4.19), exhibited in the same year as *The Awakening Conscience*, with its display of respectable ladies in their Cashmere shawls and bonnets enjoying the seaside. Described by the *Art Journal* as 'a memento of the habits and manners of the English "at the seaside" in the middle of the nineteenth century', the painting provided the kind of 'pleasure' that the *Examiner* demanded

[22] Ibid, p.187

[23] 'The Fine Arts', *Examiner,* (13 May 1854), p.293; See also the 'Fine Arts', *Spectator* (27 May 1854), p.567, who describe the subject as a 'painful one' but fail to reveal what the subject actually is.

from art.[24] By contrast, Hunt's signifying system, although apparently understandable to the *Examiner* critic, did not operate in a socially appropriate way; it brought the horrors of extramarital sex and prostitution right into the heart of respectable society but it also, as this chapter argues, presented viewers with a metaphor for a society in peril with an unrelenting realism free from any idealising form.

* * *

John Ruskin's response to the lack of comprehension shown by critics at the time was to produce a letter to *The Times*, published in May 1854, in which he claims, 'There is not a single object in all that room, common, modern, vulgar […] but it becomes tragical if rightly read'.[25] Ruskin's idea of 'rightly' read involved constructing a tragic narrative using a semiotic method. The meaning of each object was intended to 'thrust' itself not only on the awakening conscience of the woman in the painting but on that of the spectator too. Here Ruskin encourages the viewer to endure the extreme detail of the objects in order to contemplate their meaning:

[24] 'Royal Academy Exhibition', *Art Journal*, (1 June 1854), p.161
[25] Ruskin, 'The Præ-Raphaelites', p.7

> Nothing is more notable than the way in which even the most trivial objects force themselves upon the attention of a mind which has been fevered by violent and distressful excitement. They thrust themselves forward with a ghastly and unendurable distinctness, as if they would compel the sufferer to count, or measure, or learn them by heart.[26]

Ruskin draws out these signifiers that have, for the most part, continued to be used or embellished to explain the narrative of the painting to this day: the 'terrible lustre' and 'fatal newness' of the cheap rosewood furniture, never to 'become a part of home', and the unused 'embossed books, vain and useless […], marked with no happy wearing of the beloved leaves', which establish the absence of a real domestic home and define the setting as the rooms of a *demi-mondaine,* rented and ostentatiously furnished by her seducer for their illicit liaisons. Ruskin's story of a house that is not a home, and a woman who is not a wife, reflects a common anxiety about prostitution in areas where respectable middle-class families lived. As one writer in the *Essex Standard* complains, the houses of 'those harpies' are where 'homes and hearth' are made 'desolate'.[27] For Ruskin also, the room has no thought of

[26] Ibid

[27] HOMO, 'The Social Evil', *Essex Standard* (16 July 1858), p.3

the old home in it and has been drained of a personal history by its fatal newness.

In Ruskin's reading the lost girl's inevitable fall is presented as a tragic *fait accompli* in signs like the 'torn and dying bird'; wallpaper featuring birds plucking unprotected ripened corn and vines while a boy scarecrow carelessly sleeps below; and the picture on the wall, interpreted by Ruskin as a 'woman taken in adultery'.[28] These objects all fed into a sequence of events ending in disease, decline and death which followed an established cultural narrative of the 'prostitute's downward progress'.[29] This narrative, as Lynda Nead has demonstrated, was mythologised in the profusion of medical writing about prostitution and disease from the 1840s.[30] Often written by physicians with evangelical Christian leanings, their portrayal of the life of a prostitute articulated a narrative that would define the popular cultural vision, if not the reality,

[28] Ruskin's reading is incorrect, the picture is *Cross Purposes* by Frank Stone; George Landow has identified the picture as Dürer's *Young Woman Attacked by Death (The Ravisher),* see Landow, *Hunt and Typological Symbolism,* p.52

[29] Nead, *Myths,* p.141

[30] Nead, *Myths,* pp.138-50

of Victorian prostitution.[31] As Nead argues, writers like William Tait 'naturalised' the ideology by presenting the myth as a 'general law of nature' which is, he writes, 'like that of gravitation, always pressing downwards'.[32] Essayist William Rathbone Greg, in his highly evocative article on the regulation of prostitution published a decade later in the *Westminster Review*, supported Tait's sequence of events, calling for pity and compassion for the 'human wretchedness' of the English prostitute, whose 'first, false, fatal step' leads to 'her inevitable future pressing her down with all the hopeless weight of destiny'. [33] Like the woman in Hunt's painting, she is haunted by 'dreams of a happy past', which 'keep her trembling on the verge of madness'. Her career, Greg insists, is 'brief', her path 'downward' and her early death 'inevitable'.[34]

It was not until William Acton, a specialist surgeon in genitourinary disorders, published his influential treatise *Prostitution Considered in its Moral, Social and Sanitary Aspects in London and Other Large Cities and*

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[31] For studies on the reality of Victorian prostitution see, Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*; Attwood, *The Prostitute's Body*

[32] Nead, *Myths,* p.146; William Tait, *Magdalenism: An Inquiry into the Extent, Causes and Consequences of Prostitution* (Edinburgh: 1840), p.34

[33] W.R. Greg, 'Prostitution', *Westminster Review,* 53 (1850), pp.448-506

[34] Greg, 'Prostitution', pp.451, 454

Garrison Towns with Proposals for the Control and Prevention of its Attendant Evils in 1857 that the myth of the prostitute's downward progress was disputed in the medical fraternity.[35] Acton's treatise generated an enormous response and split the medical profession between those who followed his theories and those who continued to reiterate the downward progression. The latter prevailed.[36]

Beyond the medical sector, within religious discourse, writers used their oratorical skills and biblical references to conjure dramatic images of the prostitute's fall. The Revd William Bevan wrote of 'rude assaults' and 'wretched dwellings' in the borough of Liverpool, of beauty being 'deflowered' and 'health undermined'.[37] The Congregationalist Ralph Wardlaw, spoke dramatically of an entire system that was 'all down-down-down rapidly down; down from stage to stage [to] squalid

[35] William Acton, *Prostitution Considered in its Moral, Social and Sanitary Aspects in London and Other Large Cities and Garrison Towns with Proposals for the Control and Prevention of its Attendant Evils*, (London: John Churchill and Sons, 1857)

[36] Nead, *Myths* p.149

[37] William Bevan, *Prostitution in the Borough of Liverpool: a Lecture Delivered in the Music Hall, June, 3, 1843* (Liverpool: B. Smith, 1843), p.14, quoted in Nead, *Myths,* p.157

wretchedness'.[38] Missionaries like William Logan and James Beard Talbot, among others, also reproduced the myth.[39]

In cultural productions, the fallen woman was especially favoured as a subject. Thomas Hood's poem 'The Bridge of Sighs' (1844) articulates the suicide of a fallen woman who throws herself into the River Thames.[40] The final plate in George Cruikshank's series of illustrations called *The Drunkard's Children* (1848) portrays a similar event in a woman's life with the title 'The Poor Girl, Homeless, Friendless, Deserted, Destitute and Gin Mad, Commits Self Murder' (Fig. 6.5). George Frederic Watts's painting *Found Drowned* (c.1848–50) (Fig. 6.6) and Abraham Solomon's *Drowned! Drowned!* (1860) (Fig. 6.7) show the bodies of drowned women who have thrown themselves to their inevitable death after an implied 'fall' from grace.

In his critique of *The Awakening Conscience* Ruskin saw the inevitability of the woman's downward progress in the laboured applications of paint that formed the *demi-mondaine*'s hem, which, he

[38] Wardlaw, *Lectures on Female Prostitution: Its Nature, Extent, Effects, Guilt, Causes and Remedy* (Glasgow: 1842), pp.52-3, quoted in Nead, *Myths,* Ibid, p.158

[39] William Logan, The Great Social Evil (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1871), p.167; James Beard Talbot, The Miseries of Prostitution (London: J. Madden, 1844), p.43

[40] Nead, *Myths* p.169

writes, 'thread by thread, —has story in it [*sic*]'. The story to which he refers is not, however, the history of the dress itself, but its imagined future, 'if we think how soon', he writes, 'its pure whiteness may be soiled with dust and rain; her outcast feet falling in the street'. Her fall is, therefore, inevitable in Ruskin's reading of the details of her dress.[41]

The one 'inferior detail' that Ruskin fails to 'count, or measure, or learn by heart' in what he calls his 'palpable interpretation' is the Cashmere shawl. At best, we are left to assume that the shawl must fall into the same category of 'tragical' as the other common, modern and vulgar objects in the room. In Ruskin's narrative the inevitable fate of the fallen woman is embodied by cheap, vulgar, imitation objects, and thus the shawl must, like the rosewood furniture and gilded frames, be a sham. Ruskin is almost certainly right if he assumes the shawl is an 'imitation Indian'; however, rather than being vulgar and common, it closely resembles the kind of top-quality Norwich shawl woven in the 1840s by Clabburn Sons & Crisp (Fig. 6.8), who were patronised by the Queen and her ladies-in-waiting. Ruskin's interpretation does not allow

[41] Ruskin, 'The Præ-Raphaelites', *The Times*, p.7

for the possibility of an object that maintains its culturally determined association with respectability. The shawl may signify the woman's last hope of restoring her respectability, but because Ruskin's narrative is too neatly aligned with the myth of the prostitute's inevitable death, this possibility is missed.

Narrative provides a coherent structure, with a start, middle and end, which, as Nead argues, resolves the 'problem' of prostitution through the 'process of narration'; it presents the story as a 'revelation of truth'. [42] In the narrative form, there is no place for an object—imitation or real—that contradicts the linear progression of the woman's fall, decline and death.[43] Ruskin's narrative process of reading Hunt's painting engages in what Kate Flint warns is a 'self-conscious sense-making activity', in which concepts are formulated 'from the accumulation of objects in the canvas' and threaded together 'into a plausible narrative'.[44] In so doing, she argues, text rather than context is

[42] Nead, *Myths,* p.141, see esp. ch.5, pp138-64; Attwood provides a more recent historiography in which she argues that historians have continued to perpetuate the myths surrounding nineteenth century prostitution, see 'Introduction: 'The Great Social Evil'—Representing the Victorian Prostitute', in *The Prostitute's Body,* esp. pp.1-13

[43] Nead, *Myths,* p.141

[44] Flint, 'Reading *The Awakening Conscience* rightly', p.53

brought to the fore, thereby removing the painting from its historical and social context.[45] Scholars like Judith Walkowitz and Nina Attwood have shown that the fallen woman narrative, which Ruskin is invoking, was reductive and misleading, that prostitution occurred in many different guises and with multiple outcomes in the nineteenth century.[46] Ruskin's 'truth', by contrast, is fixed, and in this formulation the shawl's association with respectability is lost, along with any other signs that might indicate hope or salvation, like the star at the top of the frame or the light emanating from the garden.

* * *

For contemporary critics the pictorial combination of Cashmere shawl and fallen woman may, at first viewing, have raised a sense of doubt about reading identity through dress. By the mid-nineteenth century, as already discussed in the previous chapter, the availability of 'finery' to women across most class definitions exacerbated issues of mistaken identity. Although the term 'finery' in the nineteenth century could mean

[45] Ibid p.55

[46] Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* pp.32-47; Attwood, *The Prostitute's Body,* pp.1-17

'fine clothes', for instance among the aristocracy, a more common usage, as the sociologist Mariana Valverde argues, had a specific semiotic function, which was to distinguish it from 'honest dress':

> ['Finery'] connoted moral flaws on the part of the wearer. Finery in this pejorative sense meant clothes that were too showy, clothes that looked elegant and striking but were in some unspecified way cheap, if only because the woman wearing them was herself a cheap imitation of upper-class womanhood. The same dress could be considered elegant and proper on a lady, but showy and dishonest on her maid. Therefore the term 'finery' had a highly specific if always relative meaning—what was or was not finery depended on the socioeconomic and moral status of the wearer.[47]

In this sense, judging the appropriateness of finery relies on the visual ability to read the signs that indicate class, as demonstrated by a satirical print by Charles John Culliford from around 1865. The image shows a well-dressed woman standing outside a booking office on London's Regent Street, who, being offered a beneficial moral tract by a philanthropic gentleman, is forced to assure him, 'Sir, you're mistaken. I am not a social evil, I am only waiting for a bus' (Fig. 6.9). A further

[47] Mariana Valverde, 'The Love of Finery: Fashion and the Fallen Woman in Nineteenth-Century Discourse,' *Victorian Studies*, 32:2 (1989), pp.168

concern among moralists was the influence that the *demi-monde* might have on innocent young women who were impressed by the finery of these elegant-looking women but lacked the experience to read their true moral status. As Nead argues, it was believed that imitation of dress could lead to imitation of immoral behaviour, thus raising urgent calls for 'absolute categories' to define status. [48]

It has been noted by Walkowitz that prostitutes used dress to advertise themselves 'in their figure', without bonnets and shawls, to potential customers, a comment which has been taken by some scholars to mean that prostitutes never wore shawls or any type of mantle that would cover their bodies.[49] Walkowitz, however, is describing one of many different types of scenario in which prostitution occurs rather than all forms of prostitution.[50] The cover of the first edition of her study on

[48] Nead, *Myths,* pp.180-1; Walkowitz makes a similar claim for the 'pernicious influence on the impressionable servant girls in the neighbourhood' from 'dressy' prostitutes, see, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*, p.26

[49] Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*, p.26; Daly, *Empire Inside,* pp.13-4

[50] Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* cover and pp.14-5, 26; The cover illustrates prostitutes 'Outside a Lodging House, Flower and Dean Street, Spitalfields,' in which a woman is clearly wearing a shawl, suggesting that even common prostitutes wore shawls. The photograph by Cassell and Co., was commissioned for T.W. Wilkinson, '"Dosser"-Land in London', *Living in London: Its works and its play, its humour and its pathos, its sights and its scenes,* ed. by George R. Sims, 3 vols (London: 1902), II, p.153. Sims does not identify these women as prostitutes.

the subject even shows a woman wearing a shawl. Furthermore, a wood engraving in Henry Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor* (1862) depicting a group of men and women in the Haymarket, a street notorious for prostitution, represents prostitutes wearing shawls (Fig. 6.10). The only indications that they are indeed prostitutes are their coarse faces, the level to which they lift up their skirts to show off their boots and, as Judith Flanders points out, the fact that the men are smoking cigars in front of them, something they would not do in front of respectable women.[51] Sustaining unambiguous and visible differences between respectable gentlewomen and women of ill repute on the streets of a city, therefore, becomes much harder due to a profound doubt about the semiotics of dress and appearance; concerns about the adverse effects of finery on virtue and its potential to spread vice.[52]

On the docks of Liverpool, where prostitutes and wives rubbed shoulders when naval ships embarked, the ambiguities and doubts about identity were clear. John Lee's *Sweethearts and Wives* (1860) (Fig. 6.11)

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[51] Judith Flanders, *The Victorian City: Everyday Life in Dickens' London* (London: Atlantic, 2012), p.398 (caption)

[52] Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p.50. See also Nead, *Myths*, pp.180-81

perfectly illustrates the point. The subject is a dockside embarkation, pictured from the shore of the Liverpool docks looking towards Birkenhead.[53] It shows a small group of women bidding their sailors goodbye, before the crew sets sail in a warship anchored in the Mersey behind them. The two central figures, a sailor and a woman wearing a beautiful Cashmere shawl, affectionately reach out to each other to say goodbye. Notably, the sailor wears a wedding ring, which leads one to the conclusion that the woman is his wife. Behind them on the dock, a woman, presumably a sweetheart, holding a green umbrella, looks coyly at her sailor, while her companion looks on.

The narrative appears straightforward, and yet the scene may not be all that it seems. It certainly was not read as such in December 1861, when the *Liverpool Mercury* found the title of the painting 'ambiguous'.[54] Critics from a mercantile city like Liverpool would certainly have been familiar with the cultural context of the phrase 'to sweethearts and wives'. It was the traditional toast for Saturday night dinners on board

[53] There are recognisable topographical elements, like the windmill on Bidston Hill and the spire of St Mary's Church on the horizon

[54] 'The Liverpool Academy', *Liverpool Mercury* (13 December 1861), p.6

Royal Navy ships, a practice recorded as far back as 1650.[55] The unofficial reply to this toast was typically 'may they never meet!' While it is not clear that Lee intended this meaning with his title, the *Liverpool Mercury* critic most certainly doubted the status of the women represented, suggesting that 'the two females in the background—sweethearts, we suppose—are too coarse-looking for a "prison van"'.[56] The writer for the *Illustrated Times* appears to have had little doubt about the vulgarity of the scene, arguing that it was as 'showy as a bran-new tavern-sign'.[57]

The Liverpool quayside was a notorious site for prostitution in the nineteenth century and, as Michael Mason has argued, the nomenclature 'sailors' wives' has been used as a euphemism for a concubinary relationship of sorts, thus opening up the possibility that the woman in the Cashmere shawl may very well be a mistress rather than a real wife.[58] Frederick Law Olmsted, the American landscape architect and social commentator, who visited Liverpool in 1850, commented on the 'cheerful

[55] *Royal Navy Regulations for Stewards*, Chapter 9, Item 0926, quoted in Charles J. Gibowicz, *Mess Night Traditions,* (Bloomington and Milton Keynes: Author House, 2007), p.157; The phrase was only changed in 2013

[56] 'The Liverpool Academy', p.6

[57] 'Society of British Artists', *Illustrated Times* (11 May 1861), p.297

[58] Michael Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexuality* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p.75

words with which the sailors recognised and greeted' the quayside prostitutes and expressed his surprise

> at the quietness and decency of these "sailors' wives," as they called themselves; they were plainly and generally neatly dressed, and talked quietly and in kind tones to each other, and I heard no profanity and ribaldry at all. [59]

Olmsted was not the only one to notice the behaviour and dress of the quayside prostitutes. English radical and chronicler Francis Place, writing on the manners and morals of the working class in 1834, perceived that there had been a considerable change in their appearance since the late eighteenth century; while in 1853, the antiquary Richard Brooke commented on the discretion of Liverpool prostitutes at that time, in comparison to the prostitutes of his youth.[60] And in the 1870s, the *Liverpool Critic* noted that quayside prostitutes were now 'uniformly elegant in dress'.[61] This progression toward better-dressed and well-behaved prostitutes increased the anxiety for respectable wives who

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[59] Frederick Law Olmsted, *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England,* (New York: George P. Putnam, 1852), pp.52-3

[60] Francis Place quoted in Mason, *Victorian Sexuality,* p.75; Richard Brooke, *Liverpool as it was during the Last Quarter of the Eighteenth Century,* (London: 1853), p.100

[61] 'Liverpool by Gaslight: Lime Street', *Liverpool Critic,* 2:36 (27 January 1877), p.59

struggled to distinguish themselves from the 'sailors' wives'. Viewers of Lee's painting might admire the beautiful folds of the woman's Cashmere shawl and, judging by her respectable attire, assume she was a good wife saying goodbye to her departing husband. Yet they could not be sure.[62]

* * *

Only one historian of nineteenth-century art has explored the shawl in Hunt's *The Awakening Conscience* in any detail. Caroline Arscott argues that it 'functions as an item of undress, like a dressing-gown', implying that the shawl is implicated in the woman's undoing.[63] Arscott concentrates her argument on how the shawl is worn by comparing its 'casually tied' position around the woman's hips to the way Mrs Fairbairn wears her shawl in Hunt's family portrait *The Children's Holiday* (1864–5) (Fig. 3.29), in which it is 'symmetrically arranged over her shoulders and gathered in neatly at the waist'. Mrs Fairbairn is therefore read as metaphorically corseted and contained as an ideal bourgeois, respectable

[62] Mason, *Victorian Sexuality,* p.74-5; Mason notes some contradictions in reports describing prostitutes from the Liverpool quayside in the 1850s, some reporting they were 'extremely blatant or predatory or both', while others describe being welcomed by cheerful and even discreet prostitutes. See Brooke, *Liverpool as it was*, p.100; 'Liverpool by Gaslight', p.59

[63] Arscott, 'Employer, husband, spectator, p.169

wife, while the mistress is deemed the opposite: un-corseted, un-contained and un-respectable. Arscott invokes the standard Victorian binary for categorising women: the angel and the whore.[64] She does not recognise or attribute any significance to the style of shawl, describing it only as 'highly patterned'.

To extract meaning, Arscott's analysis therefore relies on the material qualities of the shawls, how they are worn and how they are read in relation to each other in the two paintings. By doing so Arscott reinforces the angel/whore binary: because the shawl is around the hips, the woman must be fallen; because the shawl is around the shoulders, the woman must be a domestic angel.[65] Arscott does not consider the culturally symbolic meaning of the shawl, because she does not recognise it as a *Cashmere shawl*. She also fails to read the shawl's materiality and how it is positioned in relation to the woman *as a symbol* rather than a

[64] Arscott, 'Employer, husband, spectator', pp.169-70; Arscott's invocation of the angel/whore binary is used to explain the collecting habits of Hunt's patron, Thomas Fairbairn.

[65] Arscott, 'Employer, husband, spectator', pp.169-70

type of woman.[66] To do so would be to move beyond the narrative into the realm of allegory.

By reading the Cashmere shawl as a culturally-determined symbol of respectability in relation to how the shawl is worn, points to the condition of respectability represented. Arscott is right, inasmuch as the positioning of the shawl and how it is worn is extremely important—not as a sign of undress, however, but because it determines how we read the shawl's association with its symbolic meaning of respectability. In other words, how the shawl is used determines the condition of respectability in a particular image. In the same way that the limp shawl abandoned on the floor in Solomon's *Waiting for the Verdict* (Fig. 5.2) represented a deflation in the condition of respectability, so the shawl in *The Awakening Conscience* shows that the condition of respectability is under threat. Its slippage down the body signifies a deeply compromised status. It does not symbolise the binary opposite of respectability; it is not un-respectable. While it may be read as a sign of past respectability, its materiality suggests rather that it is the last hope of respectability; it is

[66] Ibid, p.170

present but crumpled and folded around a body under threat. In this reading it is not an item of undress; it is an item of salvation. The shawl acts as a barrier between the man and the woman's body. Like a chastity belt it is tied around the most contentious and intimate part of the young woman's body, the knot in the shawl functioning as a gigantic lock. This metaphor is formally reinforced by her curled-up fingers, echoed in the shape of the folds of the knot tying the shawl together.

Hunt had explored the idea of the girdle representing chastity in two earlier works: his 1850 sketch for *The Lady of Shalott* (Fig. 6.12) and the painting *Valentine Rescuing Sylvia from Proteus* (1851) (Fig. 6.13). Both of the protagonists in these images, who are in danger of losing their virtue, are wearing shawls girdling their waists.[67] Furthermore, the pose of the Lady of Shalott with her hand near her groin anticipates that of the young woman in *The Awakening Conscience* and is reminiscent, as Elizabeth Prettejohn has noted, of the modest *pudicitia* poses of ancient statues.[68] The shawl, like the hands, is therefore a protective barrier to

[67] The thematic and visual similarities between *The Awakening Conscience* and Hunt's 1850 sketch for *The Lady of Shalott* are discussed by Samuel J. Wagstaff, 'Some Notes on Holman Hunt and the Lady of Shalott', *Wadsworth Athenaeum Bulletin*, 11, (Summer 1962), p.14

[68] Elizabeth Prettejohn, *The Art of the Pre-Raphaelites* (London: Tate Publishing, 2000), pp.225-7

the man's advances, a final attempt at restoring modesty and past respectability. In this narrative form, respectability as embodied by the shawl is shown to be under threat in its crumpled form, yet positioned as an item of salvation, thus making the narrative conclusion anything but as inevitable as Ruskin would have it. This reading aligns the narrative with Hunt's general belief—which he recorded when discussing Augustus Egg's triptych *Past and Present* (1858)—that 'it is by no means a matter of course when a woman falls that she should die in misery'.[69] Indeed, he claims she 'often reaps reward rather than punishment for her sin'. For Hunt that reward is spiritual redemption.

Hunt's intention with *The Awakening Conscience*, as his writings tell us, was to use this modern day narrative to express more than the redemption of a fallen woman. In a letter to George Evans in 1885, he explains that the image is allegorical, a 'literal fact' used to 'illustrate the working of God's appeal to Sinners', which he had illustrated 'in a spiritual manner' in his painting *The Light of the World* (c.1853) (Fig. 6.14).[70]

[69] William Holman Hunt, 'Notes on the life of Augustus L. Egg', *Reader*, 1 (1863), p.57

[70] William Holman Hunt: Letter to George Evans Sept 17, 1885, Houghton Library, Harvard University, MS Eng 1028-65

Exhibited in the same year, *The Light of the World* is an allegory of God's eternal presence even in the most darkened of hearts. *The Awakening Conscience* transposes that allegory into a contemporary setting, using narrative as the parable. In other words, the painting has two meanings, a local, narrative meaning and a universal, allegorical meaning. The narrative of salvation for one woman becomes an allegory of salvation for a whole society.

Allegory, as Craig Owens writes, is very closely associated with the palimpsest, a text understood through another text, its meaning being ulterior to that which has already been revealed.[71] In this sense, reading the allegory in Hunt's painting is to read *through* the narrative of the fallen woman and her awakening. Like the palimpsest, allegory replaces narrative, but the narrative is still visible from beneath; the two forms work together rather than against one another.

Walter Benjamin, who was largely responsible for the revival of allegorical theory in the twentieth century, writes that 'allegories are, in

[71] Craig Owens, 'The Allegorical Impulse: Toward a Theory of Postmodernism'—Part One, *October*, 12 (Spring, 1980), p.69; Owens's argument runs counter to some modernist, such as Benedetto Croce, who argued that an allegory 'arrives attached to a finished work *post festum* […] It is an expression externally added to another expression.' Benedetto Croce, *Aesthetic*, trans. by Douglas Ainslie (New York: Noonday, 1966), p.35

the realm of thoughts, what ruins are in the realm of things'.[72] Like a ruin, which forces the mind to recreate what is no longer there from what *is* there, to complete the incomplete, so the allegory overlays the narrative to complete what has been left out.[73] Benjamin believed that allegory resides in the image of 'consciously constructed ruins'.[74] 'It is fallen nature', he writes, 'which bears the imprint of the progression of history'.[75] In *The Awakening Conscience,* it is the *fallen woman*, like a ruin, who bears the imprint of the progression of *society.* Like the fragment of ruin left once the edifice of society has decayed, she is the embodiment of the history, the human struggle and the tragedy of her time.

Literary scholar Morton Bloomfield argues that for Benjamin allegory was necessary in 'an alienated world or a world in ruins'.[76] For many Victorians of the mid-nineteenth century, as Walter Houghton has shown, a sense of uncertainty and doubt had invaded their spiritual

[72] Walter Benjamin, *The Origins of German Tragic Drama*, 1st publ. 1928, trans. by John Osborne (London: New Left Books, 1977), p.178

[73] Morton W. Bloomfield, 'Varieties of Allegory and Interpretation', *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*, 41 (1987), p.334

[74] Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p.182

[75] Ibid

[76] Bloomfield, 'Varieties of Allegory', p.334

beliefs, their knowledge, their morality and their mortality, leaving them with a sense of alienation, a world in which there were lots of narratives but little certainty of what they meant.[77] In such an alienated world, and especially a world in which society was perceived to be in moral decline, the prostitute or fallen woman was a natural force of decay embodying that decline.

By the 1850s, as the *Saturday Review* noted in an article on prostitution, 'the term "Social Evil", by a queer translation of the abstract into a concrete, has become a personality'.[78] The prostitute in particular, but also women engaged with extra-marital sex, became objects of both intrigue and repugnance. She had become, as Judith Walkowitz writes, 'ingrained in public consciousness as a highly visual symbol of the social dislocation attendant upon the new industrial era'.[79] In an age of doubt, where ethics and virtue were being challenged on multiple fronts and

[77] Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind*, p.11 n.42. The view he advocated of the Victorian epoch, was not simply that doubt existed, but that it was an 'age of doubt' rather than of 'certitude'. See also John Morley, *Recollections,* 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1917), I, p.100; Lord Acton, review of John Cross's *Life of George Eliot,* in *Nineteenth Century* 17 (March 1885), p.485, quoted in Morley, *Recollections*, I, pp.15-6; John Stuart Mill, 'Mill's Diary: January 13, 1854', *Letters,* ed. by H.S.R. Elliot, 2 vols (London and New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1910), II, p.359; Bulwer-Lytton, *England and the English*, II, p.166

[78] 'The Literature of the Social Evil', *Saturday Review* (6 October 1860), p. 417

[79] Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* p.32

public morality had consequences for national stability, the prostitute embodied the fears and anxieties of society.[80] These anxieties, particularly in times of social crisis, as Nead argues, 'were deflected or displaced on to questions of morality'. So, for example, the panic generated by the Indian Mutiny in 1857 resulted in the attempted clearance of prostitutes from London streets.[81] In other words, the prostitute was a sign not only of society's sexual degradation, but of anxieties and fears pertaining to wider social issues. In cultural productions like paintings, the prostitute or fallen woman was a signifying symbol who reflected concerns about the effects on society of consumer culture, of rapid urbanisation and of imperial expansion.[82]

Within the allegorical framework, the Cashmere shawl, juxtaposed with the fallen woman, functions as a measure of society's potential for salvation. The original inspiration for the painting, Hunt claims, comes from Proverbs 25:20, which he had inscribed on its frame: 'As he that

[80] Nead, 'The Magdalen in Modern Times', p.30
[81] Ibid
[82] Ibid

taketh away a garment in cold weather, so is he that singeth songs to an heavy heart.'[83] In his memoirs, Hunt recalls:

> These words, expressing the unintended stirring up of the deeps of pure affection by the idle sing-song of an empty mind, led me to see how the companion of the girl's fall might himself be the unconscious utterer of a divine message. In scribbles I arranged the two figures to present the woman recalling the memory of her childish home, and breaking away from her gilded cage with a startled awakening while her shallow companion still sings on, ignorantly intensifying her repentant purpose.[84]

The shawl-as-allegory and the proverbial garment are one and the same, a garment that protects. It keeps out the cold, or evil. In the parable the 'showy, handsome tiger' *is* he that taketh away a young woman's last garment of respectability, who cruelly and thoughtlessly sings songs despite her breaking heart. The shawl could simply signify the woman's past respectability. The man's outstretched arm functions as an enticement for the woman to continue indulging in sin, but it also works as an enticement for the viewer to pay closer attention to the shawl. It functions as a threat that salvation can be easily lost, with just

[83] Hunt's quotation elides the first and last clauses of Proverbs 25:20, omitting 'and as vinegar upon nitre'

[84] Hunt, *Pre-Raphaelitism*, *The Times,* pp.346-7

one tug on the knot of the shawl. The shawl is the barrier between virtue and vice, and the reading is, to borrow Owen's phrase, 'suspended in its own uncertainty'.[85] Paradoxically, by continuing to seek gratification, with both the gesture of enticement and through thoughtlessly persisting with the music, the man who 'singeth songs to an heavy heart' has inadvertently opened the window to redemption.[86] This paradox links back to Hunt's allegory in *The Light of the World,* demonstrating how God can be found even in the darkest of places. 'At one stroke', as Benjamin wrote, 'the profound vision of allegory transforms things and works into stirring writing' [or in this case, painting].[87]

* * *

In Hunt's painting, the condition of salvation is hopeful, as is evident in the symbolism of the star embossed on the frame, in the brilliant light in the garden into which the woman looks, in the title of the painting and, of course, in the shawl. Where the shawl in Hunt's painting is still attached

[85] Craig Owens, 'The Allegorical Impulse: Toward a Theory of Postmodernism'—Part Two, *October*, 113 (Summer, 1980), p.61

[86] Ruskin argues this point in 'The Præ-Raphaelites', *The Times*, p.7

[87] Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p.176

to the woman's body, albeit crumpled and lowered to her hips, signalling that redemption is still possible to those sinners who seek God, in John Roddam Spencer Stanhope's *Thoughts of the Past* (1859) (Fig. 6.2), a painting of a common prostitute in her dirty lodgings on the Thames, the shawl has been relegated to memory and the condition of respectability has been removed from the main subject. Stanhope's painting has no redemption message instead it expresses resignation, or perhaps as Alison Smith writes, it shows a woman with steely determination to survive and carry on regardless.[88]

Thoughts of the Past was produced in the summer after William Acton's influential treatise of 1857 caused so much debate about the physical and moral impact of vice on society.[89] The frequency with which the terms 'prostitute', 'prostitution' and 'social evil' were used in the British media had increased rapidly from the late 1830s, reaching their highest point in 1858.[90] Despite an actual reduction in prostitute numbers between the late eighteenth century and the mid-nineteenth century, or

[88] Smith, *Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant-Garde*, p.144

[89] Acton, *Prostitution Considered in its Moral, Social and Sanitary Aspects*

[90] Nead, *Myths,* p.149 argues that '1857–8 marked a climax' in the medical profession for securing 'legal ratification of the profession' in the passing of the Medical Act on August 1858

at the very least a stasis in some areas, the overriding public perception, particularly among the respectable middle classes, was of prostitution as the great social evil, which threatened the very fabric of society by spreading disease—both physical and moral—to respectable society.[91] *The Times* reported that 'an influential deputation from the most important metropolitan parishes' was formed to investigate the 'immoral condition' of London, especially the impact of prostitution on respectable areas.[92]

> [T]here were streets which 30 years ago were respectably tenanted by persons who kept their carriages, which were now hardly fit to walk through from the existence of 60 bad houses in one street alone.[93]

Some streets were even pronounced no-go areas for respectable people, like Portland Place, which is described as being:

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[91] An increase in sexual deviance was, however only a perception as Nead and Mason have both demonstrated. Although they approach the subject from different perspectives, both argue that a 'trickle-down' *improvement* in social morality was evident across society, rather than a 'downward progress' of sexual deviance, including among prostitutes; Nead, *Myths*, p.157; Mason, *Victorian Sexuality,* p.5

[92] 'The Social Evil', *The Times* (11 March 1858), p.7

[93] Ibid

> in such a state from the increase of prostitution that no respectable person could live there owing to the disgusting scenes and obscene language from those who infested it, to the annoyance of all respectable persons.[94]

This surge in commentary on prostitution was accompanied in London by the 'Great Stink' which rose off the River Thames, expelling lawmakers from the Houses of Parliament, permeating the hot summer air like an invisible miasmic disease and exacerbating the sense of impending doom reported in the press. [95] 'Let ministers take care of their own measures', thundered *The Times*; 'what matters what laws are made when the plague is coming'.[96] Stanhope's painting, described by Jonathan Ribner as an image of 'moral pollution', was also produced that summer in a studio at Chatham Place, situated just above the stinking river, and it reflects the sense that society was beyond redemption.

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[94] Ibid

[95] The 'great social evil' as a theme, also used by Acton (on pages 72 and 170), is repeated often in the press. *The Times* was particularly fond of the title, see 'The Great Social Evil', *The Times* (24 February 1858), p.12; 'The Great Social Evil', *The Times* (17 March 1858, p.5; The 'great social evil' was also describe by Reverend William Tuckniss in 'The Agencies at Present in Operation Within the Metropolis for the Suppression of Vice and Crime', *London Labour and the London Poor*, ed. by Henry Mayhew, 4 vols. (London: 1861), IV, pp.30-8; For artistic responses to the Great Stink see Ribner, 'The Thames and Sin in the Age of the Great Stink', p.38; It was a common Victorian belief that disease was caused by miasma, see Susan A. Williams, *The Rich Man and the Diseased Poor in Early Victorian Literature*, (New Jersey: Atlantic Highlands, 1987), ch.1

[96] The "Times" Thunder and the Thames Stink', [reprint from *The Times*], *Reynolds's Newspaper*, (4 July 1858), p.4

The scene denotes a young prostitute, deep in thought, standing in front of a window with a view of Waterloo Bridge, in her rundown lodgings, with their torn curtain, light-deprived pot plant with withering leaves, cracked window and damaged dresser. The conflation of bridge, miasma-emitting river and the obvious signs of decay in her room, evoke the iconic narrative of the fallen woman throwing herself into that same filthy river. At the time the painting was produced, this image of the fallen woman was made all the more potent by the language of contagion, pollution and filth that authors like Acton used when discussing the social conditions of prostitution.[97] Like the kept mistress in Hunt's painting, the prostitute in Stanhope's has been reminded of her past. A letter tucked into the edge of the mirror on her dresser indicates that it is from someone related to her past; it acts as a link between the present and her past (Fig. 6.15). Instead of horror, however, she appears to experience resignation.

An early study for the painting suggests that Stanhope had considered the idea of remorse and repentance, as her eyes are turned up

[97] Attwood, *The Prostitute's Body,* p.33

as if in prayer (Fig. 6.16). In the final execution, however, he has opted for resignation and regret. Significantly, in the study the shawl is absent, and a very small mirror on a table faces away from her and the viewer. In the final painting the Cashmere shawl appears in a much larger mirror that points towards the viewer. In the narrative mode, the shawl functions as a reflection of her past respectability, a respectability that is no longer available to her. Allegorically, the shawl functions as a reflection on collective notions of virtue, spirituality and community in an age when all these conditions were being challenged by modernity (the big city outside the window), industrialisation (bridges and cranes) and, of course, commerce.

The Cashmere shawl reflected in the mirror is a kind of *mise-en-abyme*, a transcultural object that appears as an image within an image. Although not strictly speaking aligned to literary historian Lucien Dällenbach's description of *mise-en-abyme* as 'any aspect enclosed within a work that shows a similarity with the work that contains it', the best known examples being van Eyck's *The Arnolfini Portrait* (1434) (Fig. 6.17) and Velasquez's *Las Meninas* (c.1656-7) (Fig. 6.18). The shawl does nonetheless fulfil two important criteria of Dällenbach's description: 'its

essential property is that it brings out the meaning and form of the work'; and secondly, it is 'a means by which the work turns back on itself', in this case figuratively as an expression of the transformation between the past and the present, rather than literally as a reflection of a shawl belonging to a prostitute.[98]

Allegorically, the prostitute's condition is the condition of a society in ruin. She embodies a society without integrity, whose morality has been relegated to the past and is only accessible through the mirror of memory. The shawl reminds the viewer of what is at stake in a society where anything can be bought and sold with ease: a garment, a colony's resources or even a woman's body. It reminds us, too, that the shawl itself is as much a condition of mass consumption, rapid urbanisation and increasing global expansion through Britain's imperial projects as any commodity.

* * *

[98] Lucien Dällenbach, *The Mirror in the Text*, trans. by Jeremy Whitely (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1989), p.8

In his notebook for *Addresses, Delivered to Students at the Royal Academy* (1896), Frederic Leighton wrote that 'the turmoils and complications of modern life make an artist's task incomparably more difficult and artificial [...]: we can no longer be the *unconscious* voice of our time'.[99] William Holman Hunt's *Awakening Conscience* was an attempt to be the *conscious* voice of his time, to use his art to awaken society's conscience to its own corruption. Hunt's intentions are clearly allegorical. He is using the body of a woman fallen from grave to symbolise the deep loss of faith and morality that society was experiencing through its love of consumption, a world in which all physical and mental senses were replaced, as Marx wrote, by 'the sense of *having*'.[100] There are other indications in the painting that support this reading. The *hortage à poser* on the piano, a replica of the Louis XVI style 'L'offrande' (The Offering), by the French clockmaker Antide Janvier, shows two nymphs on either side of a timepiece, the one holding out a string of pearls to her companion, which she has selected from an urn overflowing with the

[99] Quoted in Malcolm Warner, 'Signs of the Times', *The Victorians: British Painting, 1837–1901,* exh. cat., National Gallery of Art (Washington D.C.: 1997), p.20

[100] Karl Marx, 'Private Property and Communism', *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, online at Marxist Internet Archive <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/comm.htm> accessed 1 May 2018

bounty of the earth (Fig.6.19).[101] On the base a Bacchanalia of *putti* in low-relief engage in revelry, suggesting an orgy of consumption. Hunt has placed the clock in a bell-jar, enclosing the vice in the same way the consumption of illicit sex is enclosed in the villa.

Artists like Hunt and Stanhope explored the loss of social morality through the juxtaposition of an object associated with respectability and a figure that symbolised a loss of morality, in order to engage with a complex discourse of doubt that came to define the mid-nineteenth century. These images did not represent an individual subject with her signifying object, but rather two opposing signifying objects: the prostitute or fallen woman, who had become emblematic of society's perceived moral degradation, and the Cashmere shawl, signifying respectability. Unlike the portraits of individual women discussed in earlier chapters, such as Lady Harewood, Lady Hamilton, Mrs Hope and Mrs Fairbairn, in which their social standing is negotiated through self-fashioning and display within a familial, social and historical context, the

[101] *L'Offrande*, horloge à poser, after Antide Janvier, early 19th C. A later replica, made in the late nineteenth century by Etiènne Maxant, was sold at auction in 2015, see 'Property from a Distinguished Private Asian Collection', Sotherby's ecatalogue, Lot No. 104, 15 October 2015, New York. <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2015/distinguished-private-asian-collection-n09361/lot.104.html> accessed 20 May 2018

nineteenth-century image of the prostitute is an allegorical figure who tells us more about the condition of society than of an individual. The central message portrayed in these paintings is that the corruption or total loss of respectability through social immorality is imminent if society does not read the signs correctly. As Hunt wrote at the end of his memoir:

> The purpose of art is, in love of guileless beauty, to lead man to distinguish between that which, being clean in spirit, is productive of virtue, and that which is flaunting and meretricious and productive of ruin to a Nation.[102]

[102] Hunt, *Pre-Raphaelitism,* II, p.493

CONCLUSION

The Cashmere shawl: woven into a century of art and society

A collection of watercolours produced for the Lloyd Brothers' sumptuous souvenir guide *Recollections of the Great Exhibition* (1851) (Fig. 7.1), depicts twenty-five interior views of the most symbolic and spectacular display of Great Britain's role as the leading industrial and imperial power of the day.[1] Fashionable ladies and gentlemen are shown viewing some of the 13,000 exhibits, divided into thirty classes from raw materials and machinery to manufactures and fine arts. One could easily imagine

[1] *Recollections of the Great Exhibition, 1851,* (London: Lloyd Brothers & Simpkin Marshall, September 1851). Of the twenty-five original watercolours, eleven are housed in the V&A collection, London. A full series of the coloured lithographs is available to view online at University of Sheffield Library, Special Collections <http://cdm15847.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/search/collection/p15847coll5/searchterm/Great> accessed 3 January 2015

Thomas Fairbairn showing his wife Allison, discussed in Chapter 3, the incredible collections he had helped assemble as one of the exhibition's commissioners; or even the Queen, eager to view the 'quite magnificent' Indian jewellery before heading off to examine the Norwich shawls, discussed in Chapter 4.[2]

The *Recollections* guide shows men in black coats and top hats cutting dashing figures, their sleek silhouettes in harmony with the mechanical innovations of agriculture and industry on show within the steel and glass of Joseph Paxton's Crystal Palace.[3] Women, shaped by crinolines, move through this 'global' space, their faces framed by bonnets and their shoulders mantled in shawls. Even with the loose, impressionistic brush of the watercolour artist, the curvilinear *buta* pattern of the Cashmere shawl *du jour* is easily discernible worn down the backs of a significant number of women in these paintings. The ubiquity of the Cashmere shawl as a fashion garment by the mid-nineteenth century is evident in the *Recollections,* but the paintings also highlight one of the central themes which runs through this thesis: the

[2] Bronkhurst, 'Fairbairn, Sir Thomas, *ODNB*; RA: VIC/MAIN/QVJ (W) 22 May 1851 and 14 June 1851 (Princess Beatrice's copies)

[3] See especially *The Agricultural Court (Messrs. Garratt & Sons' Stand)* by E.T.Dolby in *Recollections*

notion of *status display*, the act of looking and of being looked at, of assessing and being assessed in the public sphere. Within every chapter of this thesis the Cashmere shawl has been examined in images, predominantly of women, which were created to be read and understood within the conditions of social status. Most of these images are portraits of individuals. However, Henry Clarke Pidgeon's *The Indian Court and Jewells* (1851) (Fig. 7.2), the first of the twenty-five views in the *Recollections,* is a good example of illustrative reportage showing the Cashmere shawl within the context of imperial display. What is important about this image is that it illustrates the successful assimilation and domestication of the Indian Cashmere shawl as an object of status display in Britain; and it also presents the wider context of Britain's attempts to appropriate and domesticate India, both physically and culturally.

The painting shows a section of the court with a large exhibition case on the left housing an array of jewellery. Beyond this, bell-jars containing ivory figurines line up in front of a resplendent display of richly coloured textiles, shawls and *palampores*, delicately patterned parasols and fine muslin *jamas*. An ivory chess set and ornate saddlebag are seen to the rear of the court, and on the right a display of model boats.

This is an imaginary vision of the colonised subcontinent which has been transported through India's cultural objects and commodities in a series of displays to the metropole, where visitors from that imperial centre are transported back to a lush and fertile oriental fantasy.[4] The rich materiality of these conquered objects, contained within cabinets, were meant to both 'glorify and domesticate' India for the visiting public, while also showing the benefits of Britain's imperial project. Yet it is only the Indian Cashmere shawl that has moved beyond the display case and onto the bodies of British women.[5] Within this exotic space are five women and one child, triangulated in pairs with two women in front of the jewellery case, two at the rear[6], and in front of the model boats a mother and her little girl. This woman has her back to the viewer, offering a full exhibition of the long saffron-coloured Cashmere shawl, forming a fashionable v-shape down her back, the lower corner almost touching the floor. The woman examines the model ships, but her little girl turns away from the display, seemingly distracted by the patterns on her mother's

[4] Lara Kriegel, 'Narrating the subcontinent in 1851: India at the Crystal Palace', *The Great Exhibition of 1851: New interdisciplinary essays,* ed. by Louise Purbrick (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2001), p.146

[5] Paul Greehalgh quoted in Kriegel, 'Narrating the subcontinent', p.150

[6] A gentleman was added to the image for later publication

shawl. Similarly, this action of turning away from the official items on display to look at the woman in Cashmere is reiterated by two of the other women in the picture one diverts her gaze from the rich display of Indian textiles, while another turns her back on the jewellery display. According to *Dickinsons' Comprehensive Pictures,* these jewels 'were so splendid as to attract the attention of all visitors to the Crystal Palace', yet the woman depicted in front of the jewellery is oblivious to the 'perfect blaze of gold, and gems, and jewellery'.[7] Instead she looks directly across the court at the woman in the Cashmere shawl. The series of gazes thus transform the woman into an exhibit within the Indian court, where she acts as a metaphor for the success of British imperialism as it competes in the expanding world of global trade and industrial innovation. As Cassell's *Illustrated Exhibitor* rhetorically asks:

[7] *Dickinsons' Comprehensive Pictures of The Great Exhibition of 1851, from the Originals Painted for H.R.H Prince Albert by Messrs. Nash, Haghe, and Roberts, R.A.* (London: Dickinson Brothers, 1854), I, n.p. [Ch. 'India II']; The *Illustrated Exhibitor* wrote that they were 'almost as much admired by the ladies as the Queen of Spain's bijouterie, or the gleaming Koh-i-Noor', see *Illustrated Exhibitor. A Tribute to the World's Industrial Jubilee, comprising Sketches, by Pen and Pencil, of the Principal Objects in the Great Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations,* 18 (London: Cassell, 4 October 1851), pp.319-20

> [I]s it not a good thing for us to rejoice and be proud that we, of all other people, should be the first to throw aside the cold garb of nationality and exclusiveness, and invite the whole world to a peaceful contest of arts and industry?[8]

This thesis set out to demonstrate how Indian Cashmere shawls, and the locally made shawls that they inspired, were viewed and understood in Britain as symbolic objects in art and society between 1760 and 1870. In it, the Cashmere shawl has been shown to have played a significant but hitherto neglected role in visual displays of respectability in Britain for over a century. The aim of this thesis has not been to present a comprehensive history of the Indian Cashmere shawl in Britain; nor has it been to provide authoritative provenance for the Cashmere shawls discussed, although such a project, in consultation with textile historians, would be immensely useful. Its aim has been to demonstrate that reading the meaning of the Cashmere shawl in British visual culture requires an understanding of the temporality of the shawl's journey, how it was absorbed into Britain's cultural milieu through the processes of appropriation and domestication, and how its evolution as a fashion

[8] *The Illustrated Exhibitor*, 1 (7 June 1851), p.1

garment became deeply entwined within the formations and conditions of respectability in the nineteenth century.

By analysing images of the shawl across social ranks and over the lifespan of its dominant semiotic economy between the mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries, it has been revealed that the shawl functioned as a complex sign associated with multiple, coexisting conditions of morality defined as respectability. In response to social, political and economic change over the century, these conditions of morality were shaped by philosophical and intellectual public discourse, including debates on the constitution of taste, the ethics of luxury consumption, the integrity of imitation and the immorality of materialism. The artworks discussed in this thesis show a multi-layered and nuanced history of how status display operated in Britain, both as a function of self-fashioning for women and as an artistic response to social, political and economic change.

There was no simplistic 'rise and fall' narrative, in which the aristocracy first appropriated the Indian garment and then abandoned it

when it was imitated.[9] The shawl's trajectory, from an appropriated fancy dress to a respectable high fashion, was neither linear nor singular. Chapter 1 has revealed the shawl's appropriation in the eighteenth century by social climbers, such as the courtesan Nancy Horton (Fig. 1.2) and the nabob Captain John Foote (Fig. 1.1), who used the shawl as an exotic, foreign luxury to masquerade 'not as what they are, but what they appear to be'.[10] The shawl thus used in spurious self-fashioning can only be understood in relation to the luxury debates and the culture of masquerade that dominated the period.[11] Artists such as Reynolds explored the mutability of the Cashmere shawl within this context to produce portraits that were fluid in their portrayal of social rank but also revealed the nature of status display within the bounds of masquerade culture.

The theatricality of the shawl is important, as Chapter 2 demonstrates, in contextualising the impact of its use by Emma Hamilton to evoke classical *tableaux* with her popular Attitudes (Fig. 2.12).[12] Her

[9] The phrase is from Maskiell, 'Consuming Kashmir', p.29
[10] Mandeville, 'Remarks', *Fables of the Bees,* p.131
[11] Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization*; Berg and Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century*
[12] Holmström, Monodrama, Attitudes

performances embodied the shawl's transformation from a fancy dress costume to an object of taste at the very time that British orientalists and antiquarians brought the Indian shawl together with classical dress to reshape the formation of taste.[13] This transformation from an exotic and theatrical luxury to the shawl *du jour* at the height of Regency fashion, captured in the work of George Dawe (Fig. 2.32), was facilitated by changes in social attitudes toward morality and the formation of respectability from the end of the eighteenth century.[14] Dawe, for example, expressed Louisa Hope's respectability through her display of an Indian Cashmere shawl within a particular genre of taste, in which the shawl recalls the attitude of the classical goddess Aphrodite (Fig. 2.3). This combination of classical iconography and Indian shawl must be understood within the context of conceptions of taste articulated by the subject's husband, the antiquarian Thomas Hope, and his role in shaping Regency aesthetics.

Understanding the early construct of the notion of respectability is crucial for reading the Indian Cashmere shawl in the context of

[13] Franklin, 'Orientalist Jones'; Watkin, Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical Idea
[14] Smith, *Consumption and Respectability*

aristocratic portraits of the nineteenth century.[15] Although predicated on moral behaviour, respectability was enacted through eighteenth-century notions of gentility, when status was still defined by bloodlines. As the aristocracy attempted to maintain their power through family networks of pedigree and privilege, however, industrial progress, mass consumption and political reforms provided the means and the objects for a much wider social group in terms of rank to display the accoutrements of gentility. Possessions became, as historian Deborah Cohen argues, 'a way of defining oneself in a society where it was increasingly difficult to tell people apart'.[16] And as the nineteenth-century commentator Edward Bulwer-Lytton complained:

> The tradesmen in every country town have a fashion of their own, and the wife of the mercer will stigmatize the lady of the grocer as 'ungenteel'.[17]

The meaning of the shawl's association with respectability diversified as social mobility increased, for the conditions which determined the gentility of the mercer's wife were bound to be different from those of a

[15] Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map*

[16] Deborah Cohen, *Household Gods: The British and Their Possessions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), p.xi

[17] Bulwer-Lytton, England and the English, I, p.32

countess. The shawl thus provided women from different backgrounds with an object associated with the notion of respectability, defined, as Woodruff Smith argues, by a woman's individual conditions of 'moral competence' and 'self-respect'.[18]

The journey of the Indian Cashmere shawl is emblematic of the processes of appropriation and assimilation of colonial objects into the cultural milieu of the metropole. These processes, as the second half of the thesis shows, overlapped with the domestication of the Indian shawl, which introduced further complexity into the notion of respectability; it raised issues of identity, class and morality, which were complicated by notions of authenticity, integrity, imitation and deception. In following these overlapping issues both on and off the canvas, and by contextualising and historicising the subjects that define the scope of the shawl's association with respectability, this thesis has revealed how women negotiated their status in a society in transition. Looking across the timespan of a century provides an understanding of the intersecting factors that affected the way the British constructed images of themselves.

[18] Smith, *Respectability as Moral Map*

By the mid-nineteenth century, conceptions of taste had been fundamentally changed by industrial progress and mass consumption. The display of respectable womanhood for a woman like Allison Fairbairn, the wife of an industrial magnate, was bound up with the modern products of technology and the resources of a global empire, as seen in the Great Exhibition displays in the *Recollections*. But it was also contained within the virtue of a nurturing domestic setting. William Holman Hunt reflects modernity in his portrait of Mrs Fairbairn as a morally respectable wife and mother mantled in a Cashmere shawl (Fig. 3.29). Queen Victoria also saw the opportunity of displaying this particular notion of respectability, bound up in the conditions of bourgeois domesticity, as a means to reform the moral competence of the nation, but especially the aristocracy. Instead of wearing the Indian Cashmere, as Chapter 4 reveals, the Queen chose to promote the locally made Cashmere shawls from Paisley and Norwich (Fig. 4.12). This was a politically shrewd move that not only provided patronage for British industry over foreign imports but also injected patriotism into the notion of respectable femininity at a time when class divisions threatened to challenge the legitimacy of the monarchy as they had in France.

Class distinctions lay at the heart of debates about authenticity and imitation. Some commentators, as Chapter 5 demonstrated, attempted to align respectability with material authenticity, while criminality and immorality were associated with imitation.[19] The artist Abraham Solomon challenges this notion by asserting the personal integrity of a poor farmer's wife through the display of her cheap but beautiful, printed imitation shawl (Fig. 5.3). In the final chapter, the relationship between the shawl and respectability remains intact and meaningful even in paintings of fallen women. William Holman Hunt uses the Cashmere shawl to address the issue of immorality and social decay in *The Awakening Conscience* (Fig. 6.1) by juxtaposing the shawl and its association with respectability on the one hand, with the fallen woman and her association with the loss of virtue on the other. Thus he attempts to express in material form the sense that through materialism the Victorian age had lost its morality and its spirituality.

In its material form the Cashmere shawl was a malleable and expressive object, and this fluidity extended to the meanings it

[19] 'Indian Embroidery and Shawls of Kashmere: At the Paris Exhibition of 1867', *Ladies' Treasury,* (2 December 1867), p.543; 'Shams and imitations', *Journal of Design*, p.8

communicated when worn or displayed. For nineteenth-century artists the consistent relationship between the multifaceted conditions of respectability and artistic depictions of the Cashmere shawl, its complexity in meaning and the adaptability of its material form, provided an object with which to engage the ideas of status and social mobility, enabling them to reinforce, to complicate or to challenge displays of respectable behaviour in artistic representations of modern women.

This thesis concludes around 1870 when the Cashmere shawl finally descended from its extraordinary zenith as a fashion garment. That is not to say that Victorian women stopped wearing the shawl, but that after the introduction of the bustle, which disrupted the clean lines required to display the full effect of the shawl's distinctive designs, its desirability as a fashion garment reduced. The Cashmere shawl was still viewed by many as a valuable family heirloom that was passed from mother to daughter; it continued to form part of a young woman's wedding *trousseau* in the late nineteenth century; artists such as Charles Lewis and John Abercromby used it in genre paintings to swaddle precious babies (Fig. 7.3 and 7.4); and in the twentieth century John Singer Sargent's impressionistic painting *Cashmere* (1908), expresses the shawl's temporal perpetuation with its

repetition of the same girl walking across the canvas wrapped in a Cashmere shawl (Fig. 7.5).[20]

These images suggest that there is more research to be done on the changing semiotics of the shawl into the twentieth century, but it is clear from this thesis that the Cashmere shawls most important period as a visual sign of morality was between its appropriation in the mid-eighteenth century until the 1870s. Woven into a century of images, from orientalised *nabobinas* to genteel noblewomen, from progressive bourgeois ladies to honest farmers' wives, from arbiters of taste to fallen women, the Cashmere shawl gave meaning to visual displays of status and respectability. The words of the *Ladies' Companion* from 1850 could not be more apt as a final thought on the subject of this thesis:

> What scenes this history of an inanimate object conjures up to the mind's-eye'[21]

What scenes indeed.

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[20] For more on rural wedding attire in Scotland and France after 1860, see Alfrey, 'The social Background to the Shawl', *The Norwich Shawl*, p.32; News reports from the 1870s and 1880s show that Queen Victoria gave away Cashmere shawls as wedding gifts to her ladies in waiting, see 'The Court', *ILN* (9 October 1875), p.317; 'The Court', *ILN* (4 January 1879), p.3; 'Marriages in High Life', *ILN* (17 July 1886), p.66

[21] 'Chapters On Dress', *Ladies' Companion*, p.205

GLOSSARY

H: Hindi; P: Persian; K: Kashmiri; U: Urdu; F: Farsi; Fr: French; L: Latin

Anglo-Indian: is used in this thesis in its chiefly historical sense and refers to people of British descent born or living in the Indian subcontinent. The term later came to refer specifically to people of mixed Indian and British parentage

Ayah *[H,U]:* Indian lady's maid

Bayadère *[Fr]*: French name, occasionally used by English writers to describe the Hindu dancing girls of southern Indian, ***nâch*** girls being dancers of northern India

Buta *[H],* ***boteh*** *[F]:* flower or floral sprig motif. Generic term used for the 'pine', 'cone' or 'paisley' motif used in Cashmere shawls

Buti *[H]:* small *buta*

Capra aegagrus hircus *[L]:* domestic goat subspecies to which the Himalayan mountain goat belongs. Found in the high altitudes and cold climate of the Lakakhi Chanthangi or Baltistan (Kashmir region). The harsh, windy climates promote the growth of their soft undercoat hair, which is used to produce the finest cashmere yarn called *pashm*.

Cashmere, cashmire, cashemire: in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the British used the transliteration 'Cashmere' for the South East Asian region of 'Kashmir'. It was also used to describe the distinctive *buta*-patterned shawls made in the Kashmiri region from the undercoat of the *capra aegagrus hircus*. The French used the transliteration 'cachemire' to describe Indian and French shawls produced in the Kashmiri style

Chand-dar *[U]:* the moon shawl is a style of Indian Cashmere shawl popular in the mid-eighteenth century, which is square in format has a central medallion and quarter medallions repeated in the four corners. The corners are connected by a decorative *hashiya*

Chale, châle *[Fr]*: shawl

Chérusque *[Fr]:* an erect *collarette* of lace or gauze, was typically worn at the neckline of court dresses of the first Empire

Chiton *[from Greek]:* loose-fitting tunic worn in ancient Greece, usually made from wool or linen

Darshan *[H]*: sight, used in the context of spiritual vision, or in the context of the giving of *khilat* (robes of honour bestowed by the Mughal kings, which transfer the king's innate insight to the receiver)

Dorukha *[P]*: means 'two face' is the term for a reversible shawl, which is produced using a combination of embroidery and weaving in the twill-tapestry method. The technique was invented in the 1850s in India and introduced into Europe in the 1860s. Also called ***tehreerkar***

Engageantes *[Fr]:* under sleeves of white cotton or lace extending out from under bell shaped pagoda' sleeves of day dresses in the mid-nineteenth century

Figurante: a female supernumerary actor who has little or nothing to say

Hashiya *[P, K, U]:* the narrow-patterned border running down the sides of the Cashmere shawl

Jama *[H]***:** full-length muslin surcoat with full skirt and a fitted crossover bodice

Kani *[K]:* although *kani* refers to a type of small bobbin onto which the weft yarn is wound when using the twill-tapestry method of weaving, the term has come to denote the method as a whole

Khil'at *[P]*: robes of honour – a sartorial gift made of luxurious textiles including the Cashmere shawl, part of a Mughal court ritual in which *nazr* (gifts *for* the Emperor) are given in exchange for royal favour

Kunj buta *[P]*: a floral motif situated in the corner (kunj) of the shawl

Kitmutghar *[?]*: used by Anglo-Indians to mean an Indian butler

Memsahib *[from H, U]*: (Formerly in India) a term of respect used to address or describe a European wife of an East India Company officer stationed in India, and upper-class women in general

Millefleur *[Fr]:* A pattern of flowers and leaves used in the decorative arts. Translates as 'a thousand flowers'

Nabob *[from U]*: East India Company official who had gained the sobriquet *nabob* due to a tendency to dress and behave in the opulent style of the *nawabs* of India.

Nabobina *[from U]*: interchangeable with *nabobini* and *nobobess*. All three were used in the eighteenth century to describe Englishwomen, usually wives or daughters of East India Company officials; see ***nabob***

Nawab *[U]:* Indian nobleman

Nazr *[H]*: gifts given to the Mughal Emperor in exchange for *khil'at*

Palampore *[H]:* a type of chintz cloth used primarily for bedspreads and wall hangings

Palla (pl. pallas), pallu *[H/U]:* the large patterned border at each end, or head, of the Cashmere shawl

Pashm *[P]:* fine, soft down combed from the underbelly of the *capra aegagrus hircus* to produce yarn for weaving, also called cashmere wool

Pashmina *[P]:* a shawl made from *pashm*, either plain or patterned. Not all pashmina shawls are classified as the Kashmir or cashmere shawls with distinctive *buta* patterns

Patka *[H]:* waist sash that accessorises the *Jama.* In design the *patka* resembles a narrow, elongated shawl, usually displaying a deep *palla* filled with *buti*

Shahtoosh *[H,U]:* see *toosh*

Toosh *[H,U]:* the softest and most expensive *pashm* fibres from the chiru antelope (*Panthalops hodgsoni*) used for the finest shawls. (Currently banned due to endangered status of the antelopes). ***Shahtoosh*** (royal *toosh*) is the most prized of the *toosh pashm* which is taken from the belly and neck of the male antelope in its winter pelage

Turquerie *[Fr]:* the Orientalist fashion in Western Europe for imitating aspects of Turkish art and culture (16th to 18th centuries)

Zari *[P]*: thread twisted with either gold or silver metal

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